

Multifamily Residential Development Act

(AKA the Zoning Bill)

HF 4009 Kraft / SF 3980 Pha



This bipartisan bill will ensure that...

- ◆ communities and municipal leaders can fulfill their multifamily residential development goals.
- ◆ non-profit developers can create the affordable housing Minnesota desperately needs.
- ◆ Black, Brown and Indigenous families can find affordable housing in the low-poverty communities where they have been excluded in the past.
- ◆ Minnesota businesses can attract the workers they need because housing is available nearby.

Since passage of the Fair Housing Act in 1968, discriminatory practices like redlining and restrictive covenants have taken other, less obvious, forms.

Cities have created **complex zoning classifications** that severely curtail where multifamily housing can be located and passed aesthetic and other **unnecessary building requirements** that greatly increase the cost of its development.

Even when these onerous requirements are met, relying on **public hearings** in the approval process often allows a few noisy opposing residents to bully elected leaders into voting against the multifamily housing their communities need.

The Multifamily Residential Development Act will prevent cities and individuals from blocking the development of new multifamily housing if it complies with the city's comprehensive plan.

Although the House and Senate versions differ slightly, both

1. require cities to create a time-limited administrative review process instead of relying on public hearings for approval of new multifamily housing,
2. limit the areas cities can zone against multifamily housing,
3. prevent the imposition of more restrictive standards on multifamily housing than for other uses, and
4. allow multifamily housing that's classified as affordable to exceed some municipal building requirements.

This bipartisan bill will give us the best possible return on the legislature's historic 2023 housing investment by removing costly and discriminatory barriers. Instead of spending precious resources jumping through regulatory hoops and fighting protracted land use battles, developers, funders, city staff, and elected leaders will be able to work *together* to create the multifamily housing that Minnesota needs,

Talking Points

The problem costs too much. Beacon got its start when a single church organized to defeat neighborhood opposition to a supportive housing project. Now we're a collaborative of 100+ congregations and the leading provider of supportive housing in the greater Twin Cities area, but NIMBY campaigns are still the toughest and most expensive challenges we face.

This is a housing justice issue. Current municipal zoning and regulatory barriers are no less discriminatory against people of color than the redlining and restrictive covenants of the past.

This bill is truly bipartisan with strong Republican support. "This is a free market bill. It is a property rights bill." (Rep. Jim Nash, R-Waconia)

We can't spend our way out of the problem. No matter how much the state appropriates for housing, if cities continue to block its construction, multifamily housing won't get built where it's needed.

"Minnesota needs to grow, and the shortage of housing is...holding back its economic potential." (Evan Ramstad, Star Tribune, March 3, 2024)