



March 27, 2025

Co-Chairs Woods and Gomberg, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Sam Temple, and it is my honor to be here before you today. I am a grant writer, OPAC facilitator, and part of the youth administrative team at Family Faith and Relationship Advocates (FARA). I grew up in a household that used physical violence as a means of discipline and was gifted with heroin addiction from my parents at 17 years old. That is why this work is so important to me, personally. I come before you today with 22 years free from drug addiction and with 15 years working in social services.

To date FARA has utilized YEHA funds to keep 7 families in their homes when faced with eviction and has provided another 5 families with temporary stays and case management support all through YEHA funding. Each of these families would be part of the houseless community in Douglas County without this funding. Increasing this funding from 5 million to 15 million is paramount to continuing this work all while offering the youth within our state the most important thing possible, hope.

This funding provides hope that houseless solutions can be developed, organized, and implemented. I urge you to vote yes on this funding.

FARA is opening a youth shelter, Dome Spe (Latin for Homes of Hope), May 1. This shelter includes full crisis services: food pantry, clothing and hygiene closet as well as supplies for both the housed and unhoused. We have hired a Houseless Youth Outreach Coordinator to work in tandem with the district McKinny Vento Liaisons in Douglas County, FARA is

currently developing a Host Home program to offer another avenue of housing options for youth in crisis, and FARA is developing a Direct Cash Transfer Program to support youth in a long-term sustainability plan for housing security.

This 4-pronged approach to youth houselessness will create space to put forth an initiative within Douglas County to reduce houseless youth numbers by 80% by 2035.

With the continuation and growth of YEHA funding, this vision can become a reality.

Thank you.