

NORTHERN MICHIGAN CHAMBER
ALLIANCE
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June 1, 2021

Chair Calley and members of the Local Government and Municipal Finance Committee:

As a coalition of 16 chambers and economic development organizations representing over 7,000 member businesses, we are excited to be a part of the Housing Michigan Coalition and voice our support for HBs 4646-47, 4649-50, and 4827. The Northern Michigan Chamber Alliance's policy priorities include developing and attracting a talented workforce in northern Michigan, and we identify housing as a critical barrier to doing so. In fact, we view availability of talent, childcare, and housing as interconnected issues, all needing to be addressed to ensure employers have the talent they need.

We are proud of the Housing Michigan Coalition's work to bring together a diverse group of stakeholders consisting of communities, businesses, builders, and associations offering real solutions focused on local control, flexibility, and placing importance on workforce housing. All across northern Michigan, we are feeling the housing shortage. In a 2019 Northwest Michigan Target Market Analysis, it was identified that, based on the potential for demand from current residents moving within the community, as well as people who would move here from outside the community, the market could support 905 additional housing units through 2025 in Manistee County. Charlevoix County could support 1,192. Emmet County could support 2,288. Grand Traverse could support 5,715. The housing shortage existed before COVID-19 and has only been exacerbated by the pandemic.

As an organization representing rural communities, we know there is no one-size-fits-all approach. The Housing Michigan Coalition has crafted legislation offering locally responsive tools to meet a region's unique needs. The bills before you today offer all types of solutions and this legislation simply offers more tools in the toolbox.

Thank you for the opportunity to support our Housing Michigan Coalition's bills. We are encouraged by the thoughtful discussion surrounding housing needs across our state.

Sincerely,



Stacie Bytwork, Chairperson
Northern Michigan Chamber Alliance



Sarah Hagen, Vice-Chairperson
Northern Michigan Chamber Alliance