



# TENANT RESOURCE CENTER

2024 Dane County Department Budget Hearing

Personnel & Finance Committee

October 23, 2023

P&F-O-04 would provide funding for a housing specialist at Public Health Madison & Dane County to provide tenant education and outreach, and lead efforts for organizing tenants. The Tenant Resource Center supports the overarching goal of the amendment to provide funding focused on the intersection of housing and health. But we respectfully request that those funds be allocated to TRC instead of PHMDC. Dane County and the City of Madison already provide funding to TRC to provide many of the same services outlined in the amendment. Plus, \$200,000 (\$113,120 from the County) would fund 2 full-time bilingual positions at TRC and \$50,000 for TRC and PHMDC to collaborate on outreach, education, and services to tenants in need.

At the center of TRC's work is educating and empowering the community about rental rights and responsibilities with the aim always toward our vision of Housing Justice for All. We believe that fostering a positive relationship between landlords and tenants serves both parties and the community. We regularly train tenants, landlords, and service providers. Every month, we respond to 1000 phone calls, talk to 500 visitors to our office, and interact with every tenant who has an eviction filing. We participate in every City of Madison Neighborhood Resource Team and are at every eviction hearing and trial. We also participate in at least 2 community events every month, including flyer in neighborhoods, community festivals, tenant outreach, and community center events with our partners.

TRC currently employs 31 staff. We have 3 programmatic teams – Housing Counseling Services (includes mediation services), Eviction Diversion & Defense Partnership, and Health & Housing (a partnership with UW Health and UW Medicine). One-third of our direct service staff are

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bilingual. We would be ready to start partnering with PHMDC immediately for expanded, collaborative tenant outreach and education.

In addition to the short-term benefits of providing this proposed funding to TRC, the long-term benefit is substantial. The federal COVID-related emergency funding, which covers almost 60% of our current budget, must all be spent by September 30, 2025. This means that on October 1, 2025, TRC and nonprofits across Dane County will lose a significant amount of funds that support our community members. We will be requesting funds from the County, City of Madison, and private funders to replace some of those federal funds. An investment now for housing specialists collaborating with PHMDC will help sustain services and resources for vulnerable tenants in our community.

We appreciate our partnership with Dane County and are happy to answer questions or provide additional information about our services.

Mary Pfothauer, President, Tenant Resource Center Board of Directors

Hannah Renfro, Executive Director

Chrisbelly Antimo, Associate Director

Matt Koz, Finance & Operations Director