
Marjorie Lewis

2617 E. Washington Ave.
Madison, WI 53704
(608) 722-0355
mlewis@catalystforchangeinc.org

May 26, 2023

City County Homeless Issues Committee

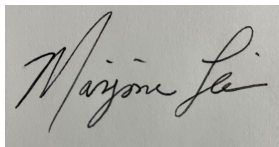
C/O Sarah Lim
215 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Madison, WI 12345

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Marjorie Lewis and I have worked in homeless services and been an active member of the Homeless Services Consortium here in Madison for the past seven years. Currently, I serve as the Co-Chair of the Education and Advocacy Committee. I am writing this letter to express my own views as a citizen of Madison, and not as a representative of the agency that employs me, the Homeless Services Consortium, or the Education and Advocacy Committee.

I would like to express my appreciation and continued support for the Lived Experience Committee (LEC) of the Homeless Services Consortium. A number of members of the LEC are active and valued members of the Homeless Services Consortium and its committees, including the Education and Advocacy Committee. Their perspectives are invaluable and their voices are powerful. I would encourage the City and County to support the work of the LEC in whatever capacity possible as both the community and the people experiencing homelessness benefit from their advocacy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marjorie Lewis". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Marjorie Lewis

From: [Catherine Reiersen](#)
To: [City County Homeless Issues Committee](#)
Subject: Written statement, item #77965
Date: Monday, June 5, 2023 4:28:09 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

City County Homelessness Issues Committee Listening Session June 5, 2023

Good evening Committee members,

I am here as a resident of Sun Prairie, I'm also a school social worker who supports our students experiencing homelessness.

Our Sun Prairie community and student population have grown rapidly over the past several years. A growing number of students and their families are experiencing homelessness – currently 1 in 50 students, or 184 students in this year alone. This also includes 16 unaccompanied students living without a parent or caregiver.

School Year	4K-12 Students Experiencing Homelessness	Doubled Up	Hotels/Motels	Shelters	Unsheltered	Unknown	Unaccompanied homeless youth
20-21	198	132	30	30	1	5	25
21-22	176	121	29	20	0	6	14
22-23	184	123	37	15	9	0	16

The vast majority of these students are double up (or tripled up), or their family is staying at different hotels. Because of this, they are not eligible for any housing assistance or programs. Their school is sometimes the only place where they can get support.

I would like to see dedicated housing support specialists to assist doubled-up families with housing case management, security deposit, transportation, and other moving costs. There are a few of these positions throughout Dane County, mostly in Madison, who provide support

to doubled-up and self-paying families. I would like to see these specialists out in rural and outlying communities who can help families secure housing in their own communities.

Thank you,
Catherine Reiersen

Hello, my name is Janie Riebe. I am a member of the Doubled Up Workgroup. I joined shortly after viewing Diane Nilan's excellent video, titled, "Not Homeless Enough." This video provided stories told by people who live in Dane County in their own words of how they had become displaced from their stable homes and how they were now living in "doubled up" situations. "Doubled up" refers to people/families who have been displaced and now live in motels/hotels, are living with others temporarily, or have some sort of roof over their heads some of the time. Thus, because of how homelessness is defined, they do not qualify for many of the programs and services available to those who are homeless. But staying in a motel/hotel is expensive, eating up savings that are needed to secure permanent housing. Staying with family and friends may put their hosts at risk of eviction, and can result in conflicts when the stay is prolonged or there is a sense of duty, but also resentment. Disruptions in living arrangements occur frequently in "doubled up" situations affecting children and their school lives, transportation, and causing a host of other problems.

Securing affordable housing in these times of high rents, serious lack of affordable options, unaffordable up-front costs is a formidable task for anyone, but especially for people who are living in chaotic living situations.

That is why I ask you to consider requesting funding for Housing Support Specialists to assist "doubled up" individuals and families with securing permanent housing. Given the many challenges that searching for an affordable place to live present, a knowledgeable, experienced housing support person can mean all the difference. These are support people who know how to find rental housing openings, how to help people who have negatives in their past rental history, know how to fill out applications that will be successful and get them where they need to go, who can assist with connecting with landlords, and who have the ability to assess what is affordable and financially doable for a person/family in a particular situation. A few positions like this now exist in Madison working with "doubled up" families, but their funding is likely not permanent. So, the model is already out there and working. It just needs to be expanded and funded longer term. And these Housing Support Specialists need to be available in suburban and rural areas as well.

In addition to the Housing Support Specialist positions, to achieve success in securing housing, funds are needed to help with the up-front costs of renting, such as security deposits and moving costs.

Please give this proposal your consideration. Thank you for your time.