



April 13, 2023

Dear Chair Olson and Members, House Ways and Means Committee:

Metro Cities, representing the shared interests of cities across the metropolitan area at the Legislature and Executive Branch, appreciates the opportunity to comment on provisions in HF 2335 – Howard, the omnibus housing bill.

Metro Cities supports state funding included in HF 2335 for programs that serve a range of housing needs, including the Challenge Program, housing infrastructure bonds, local housing trust funds, first generation homebuyer down payment assistance, rental assistance, and homebuyer education, counseling, and training programs.

Metro Cities' policies support funding to assist with development, preservation, and maintenance of existing housing stock affordable to residents in the low-to-moderate income range. Funding for the Community Stabilization program in the bill will support local efforts to preserve this essential housing stock.

Metro Cities supports the housing aid for local governments in the bill and the flexibility to allow cities to transfer housing aid into a local housing trust fund, and supports state resources for rental assistance, an important component of housing affordability.

Metro Cities has long supported state revenues that address housing needs. To this end, Metro Cities is concerned about the creation of a metro sales tax for rental assistance and local housing aid. Metro Cities opposes substituting funding for programs that serve state objectives and are traditionally funded with state revenues, such as housing, with local tax sources, or funding mechanisms that would disparately affect taxpayers in the metropolitan region.

Thank you for your consideration of this letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Ania McDonnell'.

Ania McDonnell  
Government Relations Specialist