



March 20, 2024

Chair & Representative Ginny Klevorn  
House State and Local Government Finance and Policy Committee  
c/o Amanda Rudolph, Committee Administrator  
Room 10, Minnesota State Office Building  
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd  
Saint Paul, MN 55155

**Re: Testimony in Support of HF 4904**

Dear Chair Klevorn and Members of the House State and Local Government Finance and Policy Committee,

The League of Women Voters of Minnesota is proud to be nonpartisan, neither supporting nor opposing candidates or political parties at any level of government, but always working on vital issues of concern to members and the public. We support policies that promote an **open governmental system** that is **representative, accountable, and responsive**, and encourage the adoption of electoral methods that provide the broadest voter representation possible and are expressive of voter choices.

**LWV Minnesota Supports HF 4904, Creation of Wards by Statutory Cities:**

The League of Women Voters Minnesota appreciates the leadership of Representative Greenman in bringing forward this significant change in how city governments may be organized. At the heart of our defense of democracy is our commitment to **governmental systems** that are **representative, accountable, and responsive to voters**. It has been well-established that geographic districts provide more representative government for those units of government having a high level of diversity, whether that diversity is based on geography, policy or commercial interests, race, ethnicity, economic status, or other factors important to voters. In the case of larger and/or more diverse cities, which have higher levels of diversity by multiple measures, creation of wards is much more likely to lead to greater diversity of representation and perspective in these very important policy making bodies.

Until now, creation of wards in Minnesota cities required creation of a charter commission and establishment of a city charter. While there are benefits to city charters, the financial and administrative burden of implementing and maintaining a city charter is a substantial barrier to adoption of city wards. HF 4904 effectively balances the needs of cities for an orderly, manageable process, with the needs of voters to have the opportunity to ask for changes in their form of local government, and to approve any changes to the form of government proposed by city councils. The overall approach taken in HF 4904 has the benefit of being consistent with existing processes in Minnesota statute for creation of city charters, changes between forms of statutory city government, and creation of electoral districts for school boards.

The League of Women Voters Minnesota wants to thank Representative Greenman for her time and effort to understand the concerns of voters for a process that includes and is accountable to them.

**LWV Minnesota urges you to vote YES on HF 4904**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Huffman", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Paul Huffman, Election and Redistricting Policy Coordinator  
League of Women Voters of Minnesota

[phuffman@lwvmn.org](mailto:phuffman@lwvmn.org) - 546 Rice Street, #200, St. Paul, MN 55103