



Minnesota Inter-County Association

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Sent Via Email

February 16, 2021

Representative Masin, Chair
House Local Government Division
543 State Office Building
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Representative Masin:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony on HF344.

The Minnesota Inter-County Association (MICA), and our suburban member counties, support regional governance and agree that reforms must be made to the metropolitan governance structure for the Twin Cities region.

We support the staggered terms proposed in HF344 but believe those changes need to be coupled with more significant reforms to the composition and selection of Council Members.

The role of counties has evolved over time to include increasing responsibility for direct provision of services having regional impacts—such as hazardous and solid waste management, transit funding and transitway development, regional parks, regional highways, water resources planning and watershed management, greenway and bikeway development, farmland and open space preservation, and the regional library system. As such, we believe a comprehensive transformation of the Metropolitan Council's governance structure must include:

- A majority of Metropolitan Council members being elected officials, appointed from within the region; and,
- Each of the seven metropolitan counties directly appointing their own representatives to the Metropolitan Council.

Again, thank you for authoring HF344 and raising important issues related to strengthening metropolitan regional governance in Minnesota.

We are eager to work with you as HF344 moves forward, and respectfully request your consideration of more extensive changes to Metropolitan Council's governance structure.

Sincerely,

Matt Massman, Executive Director
Minnesota Inter-County Association