



April 27, 2022

Dear Members of the Commerce Finance and Policy Committee:

We appreciate the opportunity to provide comments regarding our concerns with HF 4455 (Rep. Carlson).

The Minnesota Chamber, which represents over 6,300 businesses with over 500,000 employees, believes our state's economic growth requires a robust and accessible broadband infrastructure. Minnesota has made enormous strides in recent years through a combination of private sector, federal and state investments.

HF 4455 would require the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) to establish and regulate broadband service in Minnesota through a wide variety of new standards.

We are concerned that this additional layer of regulation would have a negative impact on broadband service and deployment in the state in ways that are not appropriate for the industry. Minnesota should be removing and lowering uncompetitive, costly regulatory burdens that create roadblocks to risk-taking, innovation and investment, instead of increasing them.

Between state and federal sources, Minnesota will have over \$100 million in public funding available to enhance private sector investment in broadband infrastructure. Other states also have similar amounts of funding available, leading to a nationally competitive market for already stressed supply chain and workforce shortages. Minnesota should not respond by enacting new regulations that could drive private investment to other states.

Reaching our broadband service goals will require a concerted approach, and we are concerned that HF 4455 could slow this important process, increase cost and impose unnecessary regulatory burdens.

Sincerely,

Brian Cook
Director, Energy and Elections Policy