



March 21, 2022

Rep. Jamie Becker-Finn, Chair
Judiciary Finance and Civil Law
559 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Becker-Finn and members of the Judiciary Finance and Civil Law Committee:

We urge you to support House File 4265 (Olson, L.) which aligns state statute with the opioid settlement agreement reached by the Office of the Minnesota Attorney General, the State of Minnesota, counties, and cities in Minnesota.

Last summer, the State of Minnesota joined nationwide settlements with opioid distributors McKesson, Cardinal Health, and AmerisourceBergen, and manufacturer Johnson & Johnson. The settlements are the culmination of national litigation involving over 3,000 lawsuits brought by states and local governments against the companies whose actions fueled the opioid epidemic. In addition to injunctive relief, the settlements provide for potentially more than \$300 million to the State of Minnesota to combat the epidemic that continues to take the lives of Minnesotans.

The Association of Minnesota Counties, the Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities, and the League of Minnesota Cities collaborated with the Office of the Minnesota Attorney General and the State of Minnesota to develop a plan for the distribution and use of these funds in our state. As litigants and entities entitled to direct allocation of settlement monies, our members wanted to ensure that funds in Minnesota supported on the ground, local activities to mitigate the harm of the opioid epidemic. Our organizations worked closely with state representatives throughout the process to craft a memorandum of agreement (MOA) that outlines the agreed upon use of the funds and the distribution of the funds across Minnesota. Our final agreement allocates 75% of the funds to cities and counties and 25% of the funds to the state. If this bill passes, the money can be used immediately in funding dozens of treatment and prevention efforts in our communities, which will truly save lives.

All eligible cities and counties signed this MOA by the court-mandated deadline in January. The next step in this process is passage of HF 4265 which makes necessary changes to state statute to implement the MOA, so that the funds can be released for use in Minnesota.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "JR".

Julie Ring
Executive Director
Association of Minnesota Counties

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "Elizabeth Wefel".

Elizabeth Wefel
Senior Attorney/Lobbyist
Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Patricia Y. Beety".

Patricia Y. Beety
General Counsel
League of Minnesota Cities