



Minnesota Inter-County Association

(651)222-8737 | www.mica.org

Sent Via Email

May 3, 2021

Senator Mary Kiffmeyer
Senator Andrew Lang
Senator Mark Koran
Senator Jeff Howe
Senator Jim Carlson

Representative Michael Nelson
Representative Tou Xiong
Representative Sandra Masin
Representative Emma Greenman
Representative Jim Nash

Chair Nelson, Chair Kiffmeyer and HF1952 Conferees:

On behalf of the Minnesota Inter-County Association (MICA) and its fifteen member counties, including four suburban and 11 Greater Minnesota counties, thank you for the opportunity to provide input on the omnibus State Government Finance bill (HF1952 and SF1831, now HF1952-1UE).

MICA supports and encourages adoption of the following provisions:

- **Sensory Accessibility Accommodation Grants** (House Article 1, Section 37 & Article 2, Section 54) – appropriating \$250,000 in each year of the biennium for grants to state organizations and local governments to increase accessible community involvement, and access for individuals who have autism spectrum disorder or a related disability.
- **Small Business Enterprise Bidding Changes** (House Article 6, Section 11) – increasing the dollar value of a contract that can be directly solicited from certified small business enterprise, or businesses owned and operated by a veteran or disabled person, from \$250,000 to \$750,000.
- **Repeal of 43A.17, subd. 9** (House Article 6, Section 23) – repealing the local government compensation limit would restore local control over all hiring, pay, and promotion decisions, and enhance public accountability by putting decision-making in the hands of the elected officials, whom the public expects to be accountable for local personnel decisions. The current law results in unnecessary administrative complexity that has resulted in contradictory outcomes, and disadvantages Minnesota local government employers relative to employers within and outside of the state.

We also support the bi-partisan and collaborative work that resulted in agreeable changes to the **Open Meetings Law**, as crafted in House Article 6, sections 1 – 6, and now passed by the House and Senate as HF820, and headed to the Governor for approval.



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Finally, we further support extending the in-person marriage application waiver requirement beyond May 31, 2021, or making a permanent law change to eliminate the in-person requirement. Doing so would allow counties to continue leveraging available technology to make access to government services more convenient for Minnesotans.

Thank you to all the conferees and your colleagues for your work throughout the pandemic, and this unusual, remote, policy-making environment.

Sincerely,

Matt Massman, *Executive Director*
Minnesota Inter-County Association