



March 7, 2022

Dear Chair Noor and Members, House Workforce and Business Development Committee,

Metro Cities appreciates the opportunity to comment in support of HF 819 - Koegel, as amended by the DE1 amendment. As the association representing the shared interests of cities across the seven-county metropolitan region, Metro Cities appreciates the committee's review of the state's economic development and redevelopment needs and consideration to fund the state's Redevelopment Program this session.

The Redevelopment Program provides funds to improve blighted properties and to bring them back to productive commercial/industrial use. It represents real and significant opportunities for properties that have obsolete, decrepit, or contaminated buildings and infrastructure that must be removed before a new enterprise can be built on the site. Redevelopment sets the stage for private investments and has been essential to enhancing capital and jobs growth the metropolitan region and state.

The Redevelopment Grant and Demolition Loan Program is one of Minnesota's most important tools to grow a city's tax base, efficiently utilize existing infrastructure, and create jobs. Redevelopment generates jobs three times – during demolition and cleanup, during construction, and with ongoing jobs during a project's final use. Returning properties to the tax base provides cities with additional revenue and strengthens communities.

Metro Cities supports the \$8 million appropriation in Rep. Koegel's bill and encourages funding this session.

Respectfully,

Charlie Vander Aarde
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Metro Cities