



April 6, 2022

Re: LMC Comments on A-22 DE amendment to HF 4706

Dear Chair Lieblich and members of the Health Finance and Policy Committee:

The League of Minnesota Cities, representing 837 of Minnesota's 854 cities, appreciates the opportunity to submit comments related to the A-22 DE amendment to HF 4706. Cities spend hundreds of millions of dollars each year to operate, maintain, and improve their water, wastewater, and stormwater systems, all with the goal of protecting public health and water quality while providing safe, reliable, and affordable service to our residents and businesses. *There are several sections of the proposed bill that would be helpful to cities in that effort and that the League would like to specifically support.*

Advisory Council on Water Supply Systems and Wastewater Treatment Facilities

Article 1, Sec. 10 reconstitutes a long-time advisory group that greatly improves communication and coordination between the Department of Health, Pollution Control Agency, and the staff who run water and wastewater facilities. It allows all of these interests to work together to improve training, qualification, and certification systems and requirements for staff at those facilities and provides a forum for discussion of operational procedures and regulations.

Lead Service Line Inventory

Article 10, Sec. 3, subd. 3(c) provides \$3.75 million for grants to public water suppliers to complete required inventories of lead service lines in their distribution systems. Federal law requires that work be completed by October 2024 but did not supply resources to do the work. Many cities will need to add temporary or seasonal staff to complete these inventories, so the funding is much appreciated.

Lead Service Line Replacement

Article 10, Sec. 3, subd. 3(d) provides \$5 million for administrative costs related to lead service line replacement. Getting lead service lines identified and replaced as quickly as is possible is an important public health priority. The federal government has committed substantial funding for this purpose over the next five years. The state will need to do the same to make it affordable and to get it done as quickly as possible. Since most of the work will need to be done on private property and on older buildings, the sizeable portion of the funding will need to come from state sources that can be used on private property.

Thank you for taking the time to discuss and consider these important places where health policy and funding directly intersect city efforts to protect public health and the environment. If the League can be of any further assistance as this bill moves forward, please let us know.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Craig A. Johnson'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Craig A. Johnson
Intergovernmental Relations Representative
League of Minnesota Cities