March 20, 2023

Representative Liebling
Minnesota House of Representatives 175 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Senator Wiklund Minnesota Senate
3109 Minnesota Senate Building St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Representative Liebling and Senator Wiklund;

Hibbing Public Utilities Commission (HPU) would like to express our support for HF 2930 and SF 2995. HPU, operating under Minnesota Statute 412 operates an electrical, steam, water and gas utility in the city of Hibbing.

HPU fully supports these bills which help communities meet requirements for a lead service line inventory and lead service line replacements that are part of U.S. EPA's Lead and Copper Rule Revision. Lead is a toxic metal with no safe level of exposure and all lead needs to be removed from our drinking water system. Lead exposure tends to be most common in lower income areas because lead piping is found in older homes, which tend to be more affordable. The deadline set by EPA for us to inventory our lead service lines is coming up soon and we desperately need assistance to achieve this goal due to lack of funding and staffing. Complete lead service line inventories ensure funding can be targeted to lower income residents who do not have a means to fund a service line replacement on their own.

HPU believes grant funding for emergency power and backup wells for community water systems is critical. Many smaller and rural communities do not have a backup well or a generator to maintain adequate water supply to their users in the event of a power outage or disabled well. This critical grant funding can help address this issue and enable communities to provide safe drinking water in the event of an emergency.

Investing in Minnesota infrastructure strengthens our community's ability to provide safe, clean drinking water, which is the most basic need for human life. All Minnesotans need to be confident that public water systems are able to meet their needs, regardless of size. Thank you again for your support.

Sincerely,

*Luke J. Peterson*

Luke J. Peterson
General Manager