



April 8, 2020

**RE: HF 4507 (Koegel) – Medical Exception to Open Meeting Law**

Dear House Government Operations Committee Members,

The League of Minnesota Cities, Minnesota School Boards Association, Minnesota Association of Townships, Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities, Minnesota Association of Small Cities, Association of Metropolitan Municipalities, and Municipal Legislative Commission supports HF 4507 as amended. COVID-19 has highlighted the need for legislation considering the health and wellbeing of Minnesotans. This consideration should be extended to our local elected officials in their work on behalf of our communities.

**Why this bill is needed.** Outside of a health pandemic or declared emergency, elected officials are required to attend meetings in-person or by interactive TV (aka Skype). Under the interactive TV law, all locations must be accessible to the public, which is impossible for an elected official who can't be in public due to medical reasons.

**Different than use of telephonic meetings.** In the current state of emergency, local governments are meeting virtually – instead of in-person – under a different statute, Minn. Stat. § 13D.021. But the flexibility of Minn. Stat. § 13D.021 only applies during a health pandemic or declared emergency. For typical meetings, if an elected official is sick, they either need attend the meeting in-person or make their home open to the public to participate in the meeting by interactive TV. Both options would risk the health of others and themselves.

**Related to COVID.** After the state of emergency is lifted, this bill would allow any elected officials who are sick or have been advised by a doctor to self-quarantine to govern to the best of their ability while keeping themselves and others safe and healthy.

Accordingly, we ask for your support of HF 4507.

Sincerely,

Irene Kao  
League of Minnesota Cities

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Minnesota School Boards Association

David Hann  
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