

April 30, 2024

Representative Fue Lee, Chair
House Capital Investment Committee
485 State Office Building
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Chair Lee and House Capital Investment Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to share written testimony on **proposed DE amendments to HF5220 and HF5162, recommendations for a 2024 Capital Investment Bill.**

The Minnesota Inter-County Association (MICA) represents fifteen of Minnesota's larger and faster growing counties, including four suburban and eleven Greater Minnesota counties.

Leading up to the legislative session, state and local infrastructure capital requests totaled \$7.6 billion. That volume of requests underscores the importance of prioritizing bi-partisan action this session to build upon the historic capital investments authorized in 2023. In addition to the critical need to continue on a path of catching up on Minnesota's backlog of deferred infrastructure needs, regular and timely passage of biennial bonding bills supports efficient planning, project management, and continuity across the workforce and professional services essential to bringing these projects to reality.

As discussions continue toward enacting a 2024 capital investment package, MICA urges that the mix of funded projects better reflect the critical role county infrastructure plays in the day-to-day functioning of residents and businesses across the state. More specifically, we respectfully urge:

- Meeting or exceeding the level of funding recommended by Governor Walz for the Local Government Road Wetland Preplacement Program. Counties have called for \$15 million in General Obligation-bonds and \$16 million in General Fund dollars.
- Providing increased funding for the Local Road Improvement Program (LRIP) and Local Bridge Replacement and Rehabilitation Program, both of which support statewide investments while prioritizing project requests based on need. There are more projects in need of funding than capacity available. Our initial recommendation of \$250 million for local roads and \$200 million for local bridges reflects that there are dozens of shovel-ready projects awaiting funding.
- Fully fund Capital Assistance for Solid Waste Management Infrastructure requests.

We also support increased funding for housing and mental health treatment infrastructure and recognize the need to also fund county requests for local projects.

Additionally, as HF5162 moves forward, we want to ensure that the language of Article 2, section 2 (definition of 'state share') does not anticipate or require that very costly local infrastructure projects, such as road and bridge projects that often benefit the entire state, are unable to combine resources from multiple federal, state, and local funding sources such that less than 50 percent of these major projects are funded with non-state dollars.

In closing, we strongly urge adoption of a bonding bill this session that aligns with the resources available for general obligation bond authority and debt service and responds to the significant ongoing need to invest in Minnesota's public and community infrastructure.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best Regards,



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