

Sent Via Email

March 22, 2023

Representative Ginny Klevorn, Chair
House State and Local Government Committee
581 State Office Building
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Chair Klevorn and House State and Local Government Committee Members:

The Minnesota Inter-County Association (MICA) represents fifteen of Minnesota's larger and faster growing counties, including four suburban and 11 Greater MN counties.

We write to express support for HF2092 (Hornstein), proposing to create a Task Force on Metropolitan Governance, including bring forward recommendations to the legislature by February 2024.

MICA's suburban county members have worked hard to develop a set of principles for a metropolitan governance structure that does not add an additional layer of elected government to the region.

Under the current structure, Council members have no direct accountability to metro communities or residents even though the Council has vast decision-making authority over matters directly impacting those communities and residents. The Council has authority to levy property tax; establish land use regulations; and plan, build, own, and operate major infrastructure systems like sewer and transit; among other consequential authorities.

A Council that includes local elected officials would provide greater accountability to the public because voters could reject Council members with whom they disagreed. For example, a "council of governments" has proven effective at moving forward regional planning and meeting the Federal Transportation funding requirements in many other major metropolitan areas. That structure could also work well the Twin Cities region. To that end, we support the creation of Task Force charged with bringing forward a comprehensive, broadly supported set of recommendations for regional governance in the Twin Cities area.

Thank you, Representative Hornstein for bringing this bill forward, and Chair Klevorn for hearing this legislation.

Sincerely,



Matt Massman, Executive Director
Minnesota Inter-County Association