



February 28, 2023

Re: HF 1550 – federal grants technical assistance and non-federal matching funds for discretionary Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act grant opportunities

Dear Chair Hornstein and members of the House Transportation Finance and Policy Committee:

On behalf of our 837 member cities, the League of Minnesota Cities appreciates the opportunity to provide our comments in support of HF 1550 (Koegel). HF 1550 authorizes funding for technical assistance grants for local units of government and other eligible applicants to assist with applications for transportation-related federal discretionary grants as well as allocation of funds to cover non-federal matching requirements for discretionary grants authorized by the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA).

The IIJA provided once-in-a-generation investment in infrastructure and included funding for numerous new and existing transportation and transit-related grant opportunities through both formula and discretionary grants. To maximize these historic investments, it is critical that the state supports local units of government in their efforts to secure funding and ensures that all cities regardless of size and resources have an equitable shot at securing funding to support locally-identified transportation and transit infrastructure needs. While cities are eager to take advantage of the numerous funding opportunities, identifying the correct funding opportunity for a particular project can often be daunting and applications for federal funds can often include costly pre-application requirements and non-federal matching requirements, which frequently prevents cities that may have eligible projects for funding from applying for funds.

HF 1550 is an important step in the right direction to support city applicants with the matching resources and technical assistance needed to be competitive when it comes to accessing federal discretionary grants for transportation and transit-related infrastructure. We appreciate Representative Koegel's leadership on this issue and we look forward to continuing to work on the language with the bill author and the administration to ensure that the process for providing technical assistance and awarding matching funds is as easy as possible for city applicants and coincides with the varying timelines for grant opportunities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Daniel Lightfoot". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Daniel Lightfoot
Intergovernmental Relations Representative
League of Minnesota Cities