



May 9, 2022

To Conferees of HF 4366, the Omnibus Agriculture, Housing and Broadband Bill:

Metro Cities, representing the shared interests of cities across the seven-county metropolitan region, appreciates the opportunity to comment on provisions in the omnibus bill.

Metro Cities appreciates the important investments by the House and Senate that support housing and recognize the important role of the state in funding housing needs across the state. Metro Cities encourages the use of general fund appropriations as well as GO bonds and housing infrastructure bonds to preserve and build needed housing units in the region and state. MN Housing receives three applications for every award it is able to fund. In the last five years, forty metropolitan cities were turned down for awards due to insufficient funding.

Metro Cities opposes restricting local decision-making authorities and encourages the conference committee to support local efforts to address housing needs. Preempting local authorities takes away the voices of citizens and the ability of local officials to make decisions that serve their community.

**Metro Cities supports:**

- The \$20 million increase to the Challenge Program (p. R1, House).
- The \$400 million in housing infrastructure bonds (HIBs) (p. R13, House).
- The \$100 million in NOAH preservation through Community Stabilization funding (p. R2, House).
- The \$7 million in state match for local housing trust funds (p. R4, House).
- Funds for homelessness prevention, housing stability, and supportive housing (p. R2-R4, House).
- Funds for homeownership through the workforce homeownership program, the HECAT program, down payment assistance, homeownership investment grants, the targeted loan pool, and manufactured home park cooperative purchasing. (p. R3-R4, House; p. R5-R6, Senate).

**Metro Cities opposes:**

- Repealing the existing authority, under M.S. 471.9996, subd. 2, of a municipal election to determine if a city can pass a rent control ordinance; and the retroactive effective date which has the effect of overturning two November 2021 municipal elections (p. R31, Senate).
- Zoning control preemptions that would tie building materials to the State Building Code (p. R20, Senate). Materials and design considerations take the existing built environment into account, as well as energy efficiency and operating costs that help affordability.
- Reallocating funds from Pool 3 (p. R4, Senate). We support using other state resources for the high-rise sprinkler and manufactured home park revolving loan fund purchases in the bill.
- Prioritizing a lower cost per unit and the speed at which a housing development would be completed (p. R22, R24, R28, Senate). If this language were enacted, a housing development that meets important local housing objectives could nevertheless lose out on critical state funds.

Thank you for your consideration of Metro Cities' comments.

Respectfully,

Charlie Vander Aarde, Government Relations Specialist