

April 29, 2021

Chair Nelson, Chair Kiffmeyer and members of the State Government Finance Conference Committee,

In advance of the conference committee convening, I would like to encourage you to include a simple but important Metropolitan Council provision in the final agreement.

Article 6, sections 9-10 in the House bill contain a provision that has received unanimous support as a stand-alone bill through the committee process in both the House and Senate.

This provision makes a minor amendment to current statutory language that allows a statutory city to establish an inflow and infiltration grant program. Our proposal adds political subdivisions who have statutory ownership of sewers or operational responsibilities as eligible entities to establish similar grant programs. By adding this provision, the Metropolitan Council, a political subdivision, will work with communities served by the Metropolitan Disposal System to develop and fund an inflow and infiltration mitigation program targeted at providing financial assistance to private property owners. The funds to create this program will come from within the existing municipal wastewater charge budget to make sure there is no impact to the municipal wastewater charge due to this initiative.

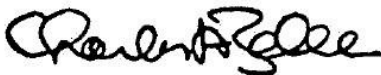
Long term, there is an expected cost savings for the communities we serve as very expensive capacity expansion will either not be needed or will be deferred. Communities will directly benefit from the program by having a dedicated source of funding assistance available to private property owners who need to inspect, repair, or replace the service laterals which connect their properties to the local wastewater collection system.

Representative Freiberg and Senator Osmeck carried the stand-alone bills in the House and Senate (HF 1359 and SF 1782). Both of these bills have passed with consensus to the General Register and General Orders in their respective bodies.

This provision is a simple but important initiative for us to serve our region. Your consideration of including it in your agreement is greatly appreciated.

Please reach out to me or to Judd Schetnan with any questions or comments. We are available to meet at your convenience.

Regards,



Charles Zelle

Chair, Metropolitan Council