



March 18, 2025

TO: Chair Vang, Chair McDonald, and Members of the House Legacy Finance Committee
RE: City of Saint Paul Supports HF1740 (Nadeau) - Community cable television programming funding provided, and money appropriated.

Dear Chair Vang, Chair McDonald, and Members of the House Legacy Finance Committee:

On behalf of the City of Saint Paul, I am writing to express strong support for **HF1740 (Nadeau)**, which would provide essential state funding for community cable television programming across Minnesota. As the manager of Saint Paul's Comcast Cable Franchise Agreement, the City of Saint Paul understands firsthand the critical role that Public, Educational, and Government (PEG) access channels play in ensuring high-quality, transparent government proceedings and robust local programming.

Community television remains one of the last accessible sources of local news, particularly as traditional newspapers continue to decline. In Saint Paul, our PEG channels serve as an irreplaceable public service by providing:

- Gavel-to-gavel coverage of government meetings, ensuring residents can stay informed and engaged in civic affairs.
- Public and educational programming through the Saint Paul Neighborhood Network (SPNN), fostering local storytelling, media literacy, and community dialogue.
- Critical emergency communications that reach all residents, regardless of internet access or digital literacy.

The per-capita funding model outlined in HF1740 would provide vital support to PEG operators statewide, ensuring residents in urban, suburban, and rural communities alike continue to have access to local government coverage, educational programming, and diverse community voices.

As the Committee considers this funding request, I urge you to recognize the unique and irreplaceable role community cable television plays in ensuring government transparency, media access, and civic engagement. HF1740 is an investment in Minnesota's commitment to open government and local storytelling.

Sincerely,

Jaime Wascalus
Chief Information Officer