



April 3, 2024

The Honorable Representative Athena Hollins  
The Honorable Members of the Minnesota House of Representatives  
471 State Office Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155

The Honorable Representative Hollins, The Honorable Members of the Minnesota House of Representatives, Staff:

The City of Saint Paul's Business Review Council (BRC) writes to provide our support for the proposed legislation HF4461 to require a license to sell copper wire.

The BRC recognizes the widespread issue of copper wire theft impacting various cities and towns in Minnesota. The BRC also acknowledges the specific challenges this problem poses for the City of Saint Paul. In 2023, Saint Paul's staff allocated an extra \$1 million to improve staff and resources for repairing and replacing streetlights and signals damaged by wire theft. Unfortunately, the newly installed copper wire was stolen within hours. The City's operational infrastructure, such as streetlights and traffic signals, must be protected because it is crucial for public safety and quality of life in all Minnesota communities. It is imperative to incorporate HF4461 into legislation to uphold our commitment to our citizens.

Therefore, during the monthly Business Review meeting of April 3, 2024, our Council unanimously passed this motion:

"...That the Business Review Council support the proposed legislation in HF4461 to require a license to sell copper wire to prevent and deter copper wire theft."

Thank you for joining us in support of this preventative measure in Saint Paul and all of Minnesota.

Sincerely,

R. Lynn Pingol, Chair  
Business Review Council

---

# City of Oronoco

Home of Downtown Oronoco Gold Rush



April 5, 2024

Dear Chair Klein and Senate Commerce and Consumer Protection Committee Members:

Dear Chair Stephenson and House Commerce Finance & Policy Committee Members:

We as Mayors across Minnesota kindly ask for your support of HF 4461(Hollins)/ SF 4455 (Pappas) to reduce the market demand and reselling of copper wire in our state.

The high cost of copper has led to an exponential increase in copper wire theft from private property, as well as streetlights, traffic signal lights, and other public infrastructure. Stolen copper wire is sold to businesses that profit from selling recycled metal.

Wire theft from light structures and other public infrastructure within our communities in our state negatively impact our communities by reducing public safety and compromising the experience people expect while recreating and enjoying time in outdoor spaces.

While our cities and partners continue to work as quickly as possible to replace and repair damaged streetlights, the lack of a long-term, sustainable solution comes at a great cost to our municipalities and residents.

We thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this request and ask for your support for this bill's passage.

Sincerely,

Ryland Eichhorst  
Mayor, Oronoco, MN



April 8, 2024

Re: House File 4461 - Copper Wire Theft Legislation

Chair Stephenson and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony today on behalf of the Minnesota Chiefs of Police Association (MCPA) in support of House File 4461. We appreciate Representative Hollins' authorship on this legislation and look forward to the positive impacts this bill will have in communities across Minnesota.

The high cost of copper has led to an exponential increase in copper wire theft from private property, as well as streetlights, traffic signal lights, and other public infrastructure. Stolen copper wire is sold to businesses that profit from selling recycled metal.

In recent years, the City of Saint Paul has experienced an exponential increase in theft of new and reoccurring copper wire from street light fixtures, traffic signals, utility vaults, heating and air conditioning systems, and electric vehicle charging infrastructure to name some of the most common.

Unfortunately, copper wire theft is not unique to Saint Paul, many Minnesota cities, counties, and utilities report an increase in copper wire theft in public and private infrastructure. The theft is happening across Minnesota in urban, suburban, and rural communities such as Cottage Grove, Kasson, Minneapolis, Oakdale, Plymouth, Ramsey County, Rosemount, Shoreview, St. Louis Park, Stillwater, Washington County, West Saint Paul, and Woodbury.

We appreciate Representative Hollins' leadership with a statewide approach to help law enforcement with additional tools to help slow the theft of copper from public and private property in our state.

We offer our support for House File 4461 and its passage before this committee.

Respectfully,

Jeff Potts  
Executive Director  
Minnesota Chiefs of Police Association



414 Nicollet Mall  
Minneapolis, MN 55401

April 5, 2024

Rep. Zach Stephenson  
449 State Office Building  
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Blvd Jr.  
St. Paul, MN 55115

RE: Letter of Support for HF 4461

Dear Chair Stephenson and Members of the House Commerce Finance and Policy Committee,

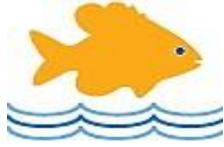
Xcel Energy is writing in support of HF 4461 and would like to thank Rep. Hollins for her work on this bill. The bill establishes a license requirement to sell or purchase scrap metal copper. We believe that this new requirement will help ensure the safe and secure resale and purchase of these materials. Due to the increased instances of copper wire theft from our utility infrastructure, we appreciate the additional language that ensures scrap metal copper is acquired and sold by lawful means.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment in support of this legislation.

Sincerely,

/s/

BRIA SHEA  
REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENT, PLANNING AND POLICY



## City of Sunfish Lake Sunfish Lake, Minnesota

April 7, 2024

Senator Matt D. Klein  
95 University Avenue  
Minnesota Senate Room 2105  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Representative Zach Stephenson  
449 State Office Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Klein and Senate Commerce and Consumer Protection Committee Members:  
Dear Chair Stephenson and House Commerce Finance & Policy Committee Members:

We as Mayors across Minnesota kindly ask for your support of HF 4461(Hollins)/ SF 4455 (Pappas) to reduce the market demand and reselling of copper wire in our state.

The high cost of copper has led to an exponential increase in copper wire theft from private property, as well as streetlights, traffic signal lights, and other public infrastructure. Stolen copper wire is sold to businesses that profit from selling recycled metal.

Wire theft from light structures and other public infrastructure within our communities in our state negatively impact our communities by reducing public safety and compromising the experience people expect while recreating and enjoying time in outdoor spaces. While our cities and partners continue to work as quickly as possible to replace and repair damaged streetlights, the lack of a long-term, sustainable solution comes at a great cost to our municipalities and residents.

We thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this request and ask for your support for this bill's passage.

Very truly yours,

Dan O'Leary  
**Mayor, Sunfish Lake, MN**  
10 Windy Hill Road  
Sunfish Lake, Minnesota 55077



515 Little Canada Road, Little Canada, MN 55117-1600  
(651) 766-4029 / FAX: (651) 766-4048  
[www.littlecanadamn.org](http://www.littlecanadamn.org)

April 5, 2024

Dear Chair Klein and Senate Commerce and Consumer Protection Committee Members:  
Dear Chair Stephenson and House Commerce Finance & Policy Committee Members:

As the Mayor of Little Canada, I support actions to deter copper theft and specifically theft of wiring from light fixtures, public infrastructure and contractors doing business in my City. I kindly ask for your support of HF 4461(Hollins)/ SF4455 (Pappas) to reduce the market demand and reselling of copper wire in our state.

The high cost of copper has led to an exponential increase in copper wire theft from private property, as well as streetlights, traffic signal lights, and other public infrastructure. Stolen copper wire is sold to businesses that profit from selling recycled metal.

Wire theft from light structures and other public infrastructure within our communities in our state negatively impact our communities by reducing public safety and compromising the experience people expect while recreating and enjoying time in outdoor spaces.

While cities and partners work as quickly as possible to replace and repair damaged streetlights, the lack of a long-term, sustainable solution comes at a great cost to our municipalities and residents.

I thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this request and ask for your support for this bill's passage.

Sincerely,

*Thomas A. Fischer*

Tom Fischer  
Mayor



April 6, 2024

Dear Chair Stephenson and House Commerce Finance & Policy Committee Members:

We as Mayors across Minnesota kindly ask for your support of HF 4461(Hollins)/ SF 4455 (Pappas) to reduce the market demand and reselling of copper wire in our state.

The high cost of copper has led to an exponential increase in copper wire theft from private property, as well as streetlights, traffic signal lights, and other public infrastructure.

Stolen copper wire is sold to businesses that profit from selling recycled metal. Wire theft from light structures and other public infrastructure within our communities in our state negatively impacts our communities by reducing public safety and compromising the experience people expect while recreating and enjoying time in outdoor spaces.

While our cities and partners continue to work as quickly as possible to replace and repair damaged streetlights, the lack of a long-term, sustainable solution comes at a great cost to our municipalities and residents. We thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this request and ask for your support for this bill's passage.

Sincerely,

*Carol Lagergren*

Carol Lagergren, Mayor  
City of Norwood Young America

*Norwood Young America*

April 7, 2024

Chairman Representative Zack Stephenson  
449 State Office Building  
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Stephenson and House Commerce Finance & Policy Committee Members:

We are the leaders of the ten implementing agencies that make up the Metropolitan Regional Parks System. We kindly ask for your support of HF 4461 (Hollins) to reduce the market demand and reselling of copper wire.

The high cost of copper has led to an exponential increase in copper wire theft from private property, as well as streetlights, traffic signal lights, and other public infrastructure. Stolen copper wire is sold to businesses that profit from selling recycled metal.

The Metropolitan Regional Parks System was established by the legislature in 1974 to preserve and protect the last great places for outdoor recreation in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area.

Wire theft from light structures and other public infrastructure within our Metropolitan Regional Parks System is negatively impacting our community by reducing public safety and compromising the experience people expect while recreating or enjoying our shared outdoor spaces.

While we continue to work as quickly as possible to replace and repair damaged streetlights, the lack of a long-term, sustainable solution comes at a great cost to our respective agencies and residents.

We thank you for your thoughtful consideration of our request.

Sincerely,



Andy Rodriguez  
Parks and Recreation Director



Alfred Bangoura  
Superintendent



Mark McCabe  
Director – Parks & Recreation



Jeff Perry  
Anoka County Park Director



Ann Kattreh  
Parks and Recreation Director  
City of Bloomington



Boe Carlson  
Superintendent  
Three Rivers Park District

April 6, 2024

Dear Chair Klein and Senate Commerce and Consumer Protection Committee Members:

Dear Chair Stephenson and House Commerce Finance & Policy Committee Members:

We as Mayors across Minnesota kindly ask for your support of HF 4461(Hollins)/ SF 4455 (Pappas) to reduce the market demand and reselling of copper wire in our state. The high cost of copper has led to an exponential increase in copper wire theft from private property, as well as streetlights, traffic signal lights, and other public infrastructure. Stolen copper wire is sold to businesses that profit from selling recycled metal.

Wire theft from light structures and other public infrastructure within our communities in our state negatively impact our communities by reducing public safety and compromising the experience people expect while recreating and enjoying time in outdoor spaces.

While our cities and partners continue to work as quickly as possible to replace and repair damaged streetlights, the lack of a long-term, sustainable solution comes at a great cost to our municipalities and residents.

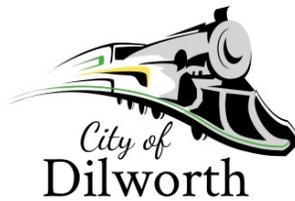
We thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this request and ask for your support for this bills passage.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kent Koch". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Kent Koch

Mayor of Loretto



April 5, 2024

Senator Matt Klein, Chair  
Senate Commerce and Consumer Protection Committee  
2105 Minnesota Senate Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Representative Zach Stephenson, Chair  
House Commerce Finance & Policy Committee  
449 State Office Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155

RE: HF4461 and SF4455

Dear Chair Klein and Senate Commerce and Consumer Protection Committee Members and Chair Stephenson and House Commerce Finance & Policy Committee Members:

We as Mayors across Minnesota kindly ask for your support of HF 4461(Hollins) / SF 4455 (Pappas) to reduce the market demand and reselling of copper wire in our state.

The high cost of copper has led to an exponential increase in copper wire theft from private property, as well as streetlights, traffic signal lights, and other public infrastructure. Stolen copper wire is sold to businesses that profit from selling recycled metal.

Wire theft from light structures and other public infrastructure within our communities in our state negatively impact our communities by reducing public safety and compromising the experience people expect while recreating and enjoying time in outdoor spaces.

While our cities and partners continue to work as quickly as possible to replace and repair damaged streetlights, the lack of a long-term, sustainable solution comes at a great cost to our municipalities and residents.

We thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this request and ask for your support for this bill's passage.

Sincerely,

*Chad Olson*

Chad Olson, Mayor  
City of Dilworth

April 4, 2024

Dear Chair Klein and Senate Commerce and Consumer Protection Committee Members:

Dear Chair Stephenson and House Commerce Finance & Policy Committee Members:

We as Mayors across Minnesota kindly ask for your support of HF 4461(Hollins)/ SF 4455 (Pappas) to reduce the market demand and reselling of copper wire in our state.

The high cost of copper has led to an exponential increase in copper wire theft from private property, as well as streetlights, traffic signal lights, and other public infrastructure. Stolen copper wire is sold to businesses that profit from selling recycled metal.

Wire theft from light structures and other public infrastructure within our communities in our state negatively impact our communities by reducing public safety and compromising the experience people expect while recreating and enjoying time in outdoor spaces.

While our cities and partners continue to work as quickly as possible to replace and repair damaged streetlights, the lack of a long-term, sustainable solution comes at a great cost to our municipalities and residents.

We thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this request and ask for your support for this bills passage.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'SJ' or similar initials, written in a cursive style.

**Shelly Jonas, Mayor of  
Annandale**

April 4, 2024

Dear Chair Klein and Senate Commerce and Consumer Protection Committee Members:

Dear Chair Stephenson and House Commerce Finance & Policy Committee Members:

We as Mayors across Minnesota kindly ask for your support of HF 4461(Hollins)/ SF 4455 (Pappas) to reduce the market demand and reselling of copper wire in our state.

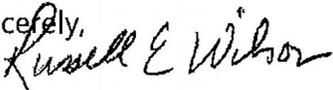
The high cost of copper has led to an exponential increase in copper wire theft from private property, as well as streetlights, traffic signal lights, and other public infrastructure. Stolen copper wire is sold to businesses that profit from selling recycled metal.

Wire theft from light structures and other public infrastructure within our communities in our state negatively impact our communities by reducing public safety and compromising the experience people expect while recreating and enjoying time in outdoor spaces.

While our cities and partners continue to work as quickly as possible to replace and repair damaged streetlights, the lack of a long-term, sustainable solution comes at a great cost to our municipalities and residents.

We thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this request and ask for your support for this bills passage.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Russell E. Wilson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small star above the letter 'i' in "Wilson".

Mayor Russ Wilson

Breckenridge, MN



# CITY OF CORCORAN

*A Hidden Gem Waiting To Be Discovered*

[www.corcoranmn.gov](http://www.corcoranmn.gov)

April 4, 2024

Dear Chair Klein and Senate Commerce and Consumer Protection Committee Members:

Dear Chair Stephenson and House Commerce Finance & Policy Committee Members:

We as Mayors across Minnesota kindly ask for your support of HF 4461(Hollins)/ SF 4455 (Pappas) to reduce the market demand and reselling of copper wire in our state.

The high cost of copper has led to an exponential increase in copper wire theft from private property, as well as streetlights, traffic signal lights, and other public infrastructure. Stolen copper wire is sold to businesses that profit from selling recycled metal.

Wire theft from light structures and other public infrastructure within our communities in our state negatively impact our communities by reducing public safety and compromising the experience people expect while recreating and enjoying time in outdoor spaces.

While our cities and partners continue to work as quickly as possible to replace and repair damaged streetlights, the lack of a long-term, sustainable solution comes at a great cost to our municipalities and residents.

We thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this request and ask for your support for this bills passage.

Sincerely,

**Tom McKee**  
Mayor  
City of Corcoran

**Administrative Offices**  
8200 County Road 116  
Corcoran, MN 55340  
Phone: 763-420-2288

**Police Department Offices**  
8200 County Road 116  
Corcoran, MN 55340  
Phone: 763-420-8966

**Public Works Offices**  
9100 County Road 19  
Corcoran, MN 55357  
Phone: 763-420-2652



April 4, 2024

Dear Chair Klein and Senate Commerce and Consumer Protection Committee Members:

Dear Stephenson and House Commerce Finance & Policy Committee Members:

We as Mayors across Minnesota kindly ask for your support of HF 4461(Hollins)/ SF 4455 (Pappas) to reduce the market demand and reselling of copper wire in our state.

The high cost of copper has led to an exponential increase in copper wire theft from private property, as well as streetlights, traffic signal lights, and other public infrastructure. Stolen copper wire is sold to businesses that profit from selling recycled metal.

Wire theft from light structures and other public infrastructure within our communities in our state negatively impact our communities by reducing public safety and compromising the experience people expect while recreating and enjoying time in outdoor spaces.

While our cities and partners continue to work as quickly as possible to replace and repair damaged streetlights, the lack of a long-term, sustainable solution comes at a great cost to our municipalities and residents.

We thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this request and ask for your support for this bills passage.

Sincerely,

*Mary D. Fashender*

April 4, 2024

Dear Chair Klein and Senate Commerce and Consumer Protection Committee Members:

Dear Chair Stephenson and House Commerce Finance & Policy Committee Members:

We as Mayors across Minnesota kindly ask for your support of HF 4461(Hollins)/ SF 4455 (Pappas) to reduce the market demand and reselling of copper wire in our state.

The high cost of copper has led to an exponential increase in copper wire theft from private property, as well as streetlights, traffic signal lights, and other public infrastructure. Stolen copper wire is sold to businesses that profit from selling recycled metal.

Wire theft from light structures and other public infrastructure within our communities in our state negatively impact our communities by reducing public safety and compromising the experience people expect while recreating and enjoying time in outdoor spaces.

While our cities and partners continue to work as quickly as possible to replace and repair damaged streetlights, the lack of a long-term, sustainable solution comes at a great cost to our municipalities and residents.

We thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this request and ask for your support for this bills passage.

Sincerely,

*Mayor Paul L. Allen*  
*City of Manhattan Beach Mn.*



5050 INDEPENDENCE ST | P.O. BOX 97 | MAPLE PLAIN, MN 55359  
Ph: (763) 479-0515 | Fax: (763) 479-0519 | [www.mapleplain.com](http://www.mapleplain.com)

April 5, 2024

Dear Chair Klein and Senate Commerce and Consumer Protection Committee Members:

Dear Chair Stephenson and House Commerce Finance & Policy Committee Members:

We as Mayors across Minnesota kindly ask for your support of HF 4461(Hollins)/ SF 4455 (Pappas) to reduce the market demand and reselling of copper wire in our state.

The high cost of copper has led to an exponential increase in copper wire theft from private property, as well as streetlights, traffic signal lights, and other public infrastructure.

Stolen copper wire is sold to businesses that profit from selling recycled metal. Wire theft from light structures and other public infrastructure within our communities in our state negatively impact our communities by reducing public safety and compromising the experience people expect while recreating and enjoying time in outdoor spaces.

While our cities and partners continue to work as quickly as possible to replace and repair damaged streetlights, the lack of a long-term, sustainable solution comes at a great cost to our municipalities and residents.

We thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this request and ask for your support for this bills passage.

Sincerely,

Julie Maas-Kusske  
Mayor

April 4, 2024

Dear Chair Klein and Senate Commerce and Consumer Protection Committee Members:

Dear Chair Stephenson and House Commerce Finance & Policy Committee Members:

We as Mayors across Minnesota kindly ask for your support of HF 4461(Hollins)/ SF 4455 (Pappas) to reduce the market demand and reselling of copper wire in our state.

The high cost of copper has led to an exponential increase in copper wire theft from private property, as well as streetlights, traffic signal lights, and other public infrastructure. Stolen copper wire is sold to businesses that profit from selling recycled metal.

Wire theft from light structures and other public infrastructure within our communities in our state negatively impact our communities by reducing public safety and compromising the experience people expect while recreating and enjoying time in outdoor spaces.

While our cities and partners continue to work as quickly as possible to replace and repair damaged streetlights, the lack of a long-term, sustainable solution comes at a great cost to our municipalities and residents.

We thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this request and ask for your support for this bills passage.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Monge", written in a cursive style.

John Monge  
City of North St. Paul, Mayor



**April 7, 2024**

**TO:** Chair Klein and Senate Commerce and Consumer Protection Committee Members  
Chair Stephenson and House Commerce Finance & Policy Committee Members

**FROM:** Mayors of Minnesota

**SUBJECT:** Support HF4461 (Hollins) / SF4455 (Pappas) Copper Wire License Requirement

Dear House and Senate Commerce Committee Chairs and Committee Members:

We, as mayors across Minnesota, kindly ask for your support of HF4461 (Hollins) / SF4455 (Pappas) to reduce the market demand and reselling of copper wire in our state.

The high cost of copper has led to an exponential increase in copper wire theft from private property, as well as streetlights, traffic signal lights, and other public infrastructure. Stolen copper wire is sold to businesses that profit from selling recycled metal.

Wire theft from light structures and other public infrastructure negatively impacts our communities by reducing public safety and compromising the experience people expect while recreating and enjoying time in outdoor spaces.

While our cities and partners continue to work as quickly as possible to replace and repair damaged streetlights, the lack of a long-term sustainable solution comes at a great cost to our municipalities and residents.

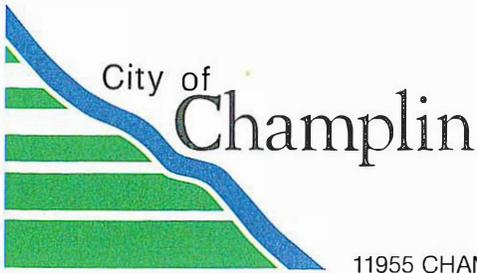
We thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this request and ask for your support for this bill's passage.

Sincerely,

Melvin Carter, Mayor, City of Saint Paul  
Shelly Jonas, Mayor, City of Annandale  
Steve King, Mayor, City of Austin  
Margaret Ford, Mayor, City of Birchwood Village  
Russell Willson, Mayor, City of Breckenridge  
Hollies Winston, Mayor, City of Brooklyn Park  
Elizabeth Kautz, Mayor, City of Burnsville  
Ryan Sabas, Mayor, City of Champlin



Amáda Márquez Simula, Mayor, City of Columbia Heights  
Tom McKee, Mayor, City of Corcoran  
Myron Bailey, Mayor, City of Cottage Grove  
Chad Olson, Mayor, City of Dilworth  
Ron Case, Mayor, City of Eden Prairie  
Ben Schierer, Mayor, City of Fergus Falls  
Scott Lund, Mayor, City of Fridley  
Gretchen Artig-Swomley, Mayor, City of Gem Lake  
Mary Fasbender, Mayor, City of Hastings  
Tom Fischer, Mayor, City of Little Canada  
Mike Pfeiffer, Mayor, City of Long Beach  
Kent Koch, Mayor, City of Loretto  
Patrick Baustian, Mayor, City of Luverne  
Paul Allen, Mayor, City of Manhattan Beach  
Julie Maas-Kusske, Mayor, City of Maple Plain  
Marylee Abrams, Mayor, City of Maplewood  
Bob Byrnes, Mayor, City of Marshall  
Jacob Frey, Mayor, City of Minneapolis  
John Monge, Mayor, City of North St. Paul  
Carol Lagergren, Mayor, City of Norwood Young America  
Ryland Eichhorst, Mayor, City of Oronoco  
William Blonigan, Mayor, City of Robbinsdale  
Kim Norton, Mayor, City of Rochester  
Ryan Fitzthum, Mayor, City of Sartell  
Ted Kozlowski, Mayor, City of Stillwater  
Nadia Mohamed, Mayor, City of St. Louis Park  
Daniel O'Leary, Mayor, City of Sunfish Lake  
Mike Krachmer, Mayor, City of Vadnais Heights  
Larry Cuffe Jr., Mayor, City of Virginia  
Dave Napier, Mayor, City of West St. Paul



11955 CHAMPLIN DRIVE, CHAMPLIN, MN 55316-2399 • (763) 421-8100 • ci.champlin.mn.us

April 4, 2024

Dear Chair Klein and Senate Commerce and Consumer Protection Committee Members:

Dear Chair Stephenson and House Commerce Finance & Policy Committee Members:

We as Mayors across Minnesota kindly ask for your support of HF 4461(Hollins)/ SF 4455 (Pappas) to reduce the market demand and reselling of copper wire in our state.

The high cost of copper has led to an exponential increase in copper wire theft from private property, as well as streetlights, traffic signal lights, and other public infrastructure. Stolen copper wire is sold to businesses that profit from selling recycled metal.

Wire theft from light structures and other public infrastructure within our communities in our state negatively impact our communities by reducing public safety and compromising the experience people expect while recreating and enjoying time in outdoor spaces.

While our cities and partners continue to work as quickly as possible to replace and repair damaged streetlights, the lack of a long-term, sustainable solution comes at a great cost to our municipalities and residents.

We thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this request and ask for your support for this bills passage.

Sincerely,

Ryan Sabas, Mayor

April 4, 2024

Dear Chair Klein and Senate Commerce and Consumer Protection Committee Members:

Dear Chair Stephenson and House Commerce Finance & Policy Committee Members:

We as Mayors across Minnesota kindly ask for your support of HF 4461(Hollins)/ SF 4455 (Pappas) to reduce the market demand and reselling of copper wire in our state.

The high cost of copper has led to an exponential increase in copper wire theft from private property, as well as streetlights, traffic signal lights, and other public infrastructure. Stolen copper wire is sold to businesses that profit from selling recycled metal.

Wire theft from light structures and other public infrastructure within our communities in our state negatively impact our communities by reducing public safety and compromising the experience people expect while recreating and enjoying time in outdoor spaces.

While our cities and partners continue to work as quickly as possible to replace and repair damaged streetlights, the lack of a long-term, sustainable solution comes at a great cost to our municipalities and residents.

We thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this request and ask for your support for this bills passage.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mike Pfeiffer". The signature is stylized and written in a cursive-like font.

Mike Pfeiffer, Mayor  
City of Long Beach MN

# IBEW LOCAL 110

Affiliated with the AFL-CIO



## Doug Suchanek

BUSINESS MANAGER  
FINANCIAL SECRETARY

1330 Conway Street  
Suite 110  
St. Paul, Minnesota 55106

651-776-4239  
Fax: 651-772-8795  
www.ibew110.org

Referral Office  
651-776-4239 ext. 740



April 5, 2024

Chairman Representative Zack Stephenson  
449 State Office Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Stephenson and House Commerce Finance and Policy Committee  
Members:

The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 110 writes to provide our support for the proposed legislation HF4461 (Hollins) to require a license to sell copper wire.

IBEW recognizes the widespread issue of copper wire theft impacting various cities and counties in Minnesota. The high cost of copper has led to an exponential increase in copper wire theft from private property, as well as streetlights, traffic signal lights, electric car charging stations, air conditioners, and other public infrastructure.

IBEW 110 also acknowledges the specific challenges this problem has been posing for the City of Saint Paul. Unfortunately, copper wire theft is not unique to Saint Paul, many Minnesota cities, counties, and utilities report an increase in copper wire theft in public and private infrastructure. We see this theft happening all across Minnesota in urban, suburban, and rural communities.

IBEW 110 supports efforts to curtail the theft of stolen copper wire from public infrastructure and private property. IBEW 110 supports the requirement of a license to sell copper wire in that it will help with mitigation efforts to prevent bad actors from selling stolen copper. This bill is a key step in that direction.

Thank you for consideration in support of this preventative measure for all cities and counties in Minnesota.

We offer our support for House File 4461 (Hollins) and its passage before this committee.

Respectfully,

Doug Suchanek  
Business Manager/Financial Secretary  
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 110

DS/wt  
opeiu#12



# Electrical Association

3100 Humboldt Ave S  
Minneapolis, MN 55408  
April 7, 2024

Chair Stephenson and Members of the Commerce Committee

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HF4461 with amendments. I am the Director of Membership and Government Affairs for the Electrical Association, an association of 265 electrical contractors around the state, performing electrical installations in your community. The Electrical Association provides support to these small businesses through government advocacy, continuing education, workforce strategies, and apprenticeship education.

First, I want to thank Representative Hollins and the City of St. Paul for thoughtfully addressing our concerns regarding the initial bill language. Allowing electricians to use their existing license instead of requiring yet another license is very much appreciated. Electricians remove outdated wiring as part of their regular work and these precious metals should be recaptured and recycled, not placed in a dumpster to be hauled to a landfill.

Copper theft is real and expensive. Street lights, EV Charging stations, the money thieves receive for the copper they steal is tiny in comparison to the repairs needed to fix their crimes. In rural Minnesota a particular type of installation that I prefer not to reveal so as to not give thieves ideas, might yield \$6,000-\$7,000 in copper at a scrap yard, but costs \$30,000-\$50,000 to repair. A member fixed one of these installations, only to be called back after the following weekend to fix it again because the thieves struck twice. Security needed to be put in place to prevent future thefts. Please contact me directly if you'd like to learn more. Over the past week I've heard stories of this occurring in St. Cloud, Mankato, and New Ulm.

We'd like to be a part of making these copper thefts more difficult so the good work electrical contractors perform stays in place. By allowing existing licensing as credentials to sell copper, it makes certain people with a business reason can sell copper while making it more difficult for those that cannot provide proper justification to get paid for stolen copper.

Sincerely,

Michelle Dreier  
Director of Membership & Govt. Affairs  
Electrical Association  
612-252-2186

Empowering Contractors



April 2, 2024

Senator Sandra Pappas  
Representative Athena Hollins

**RE: SF 4455/HF 4461—Copper metal sale license requirement**

Dear Senator Pappas and Representative Hollins,

The League of Minnesota Cities (LMC) is an association serving 838 of Minnesota's 855 cities through advocacy, education and training, policy development, risk management and other services.

Thank you for authoring SF 4455/HF 4461, a bill that requires individuals selling or purchasing scrap metal copper to hold a license to do so. The League supports this legislation.

The high cost of copper has led to an increase in copper wire thefts from private property as well as streetlights, signal lights and other public infrastructure. Stolen copper wire is sold to businesses that profit from selling recycled metal. Copper wire thefts compromise public safety by disabling streetlights and traffic signals. The cost to repair and replace infrastructure damaged by copper wire thefts is borne by taxpayers.

The League of Minnesota Cities supports efforts to curtail the theft of copper wire from public infrastructure and private property. The League supports statutory changes that prevent metal recycling businesses from purchasing and reselling stolen copper, and this bill is a key step in that direction.

We look forward to working with you to advance this important legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Anne Finn".

Anne Finn  
Intergovernmental Relations Director



April 5, 2024

Dear Chair Stephenson and Members of the Commerce Committee:

Metro Cities, representing the collective interests of cities in the metropolitan area, appreciates the opportunity to comment on HF 4461 (Hollins), which is being heard in the Commerce Committee on Monday.

Wire theft from streetlights, other public infrastructure, and private property negatively impacts communities by reducing public safety for all transportation modes. These thefts also cost cities hundreds of thousands of dollars each year to replace and repair damaged streetlights. Metro Cities supports efforts to curtail the theft of copper wire from public infrastructure and private property. Metro Cities thanks the author for their work and the committee for their attention on this important issue.

Thank you for your consideration of this letter. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Michael Lund'. The signature is written in a cursive style.

Mike Lund  
Government Relations Specialist  
Metro Cities



# Increase in Copper Wire Theft – Not Just Street Lights

City of Saint Paul leaders to champion proposed new state legislation co-authored by Senator Pappas and Representative Hollins to curb the selling of stolen copper metals



In recent years, the City of Saint Paul has experienced an exponential increase of both new and reoccurring copper wire theft from street light fixtures both in city right of way and parks. The theft areas have drastically expanded from a few, regular targeted street lights in isolated areas to now impacting the entire city, including public and private infrastructure such as:

- Park trails and parking lots
- Major arterial and collector streets
- Traffic signals
- EV charging stations
- Street lights
- Ground access panels
- Utility vaults
- Heating and air conditioning systems
- Private businesses and homes

The City of Saint Paul is not unique in dealing with rampant wire theft from public and private infrastructure. Other Minnesota cities, municipalities, and utilities are reporting increase in copper wire thefts. In all parts of the country, wire theft is a growing issue.

## New Proposed Copper Metal Legislation

The City of Saint Paul is leading new state legislation, alongside authors Sen. Pappas and Rep. Hollins. The proposed legislation, HF 4461/ SF 4455 would:



**Require any person who is selling copper metal to have a license issued by the state. Persons licensed to perform electrical work are deemed to hold a license.**



**Allow residents and businesses to still recycle copper materials with scrap metal companies for free.**

### Why Are They Stealing Copper Wire? Market Demand!

Since 2020, the price for scrap copper metal has been at all-time highs. As of March 18, 2024, copper metal was valued at \$4.13 per troy ounce. According to scrapmetal.com, which tracks state averages paid for materials at scrap yards in Minnesota, bare #1 copper wire scrap is being purchased for an average of \$3.65 per pound.

### What Can Residents and Businesses Do?

1. If you see something, say something. Call 911! Report suspicious behavior or activity around street lights, traffic signals, EV chargers, utility vaults, or private property. With the help of the watchful eyes of Saint Paul residents and business owners, the Saint Paul Police Department has caught and arrested thieves.
2. Join Camera Watch. Registering your residential or business security camera and coverage information with the Saint Paul Police Department can help create safer neighborhoods for all. Your information is kept confidential. With this voluntary program the police department does not have access to your cameras but keeps a record of active cameras throughout the city. They may reach out to owners if and when needed.



Register your camera by scanning the QR code, or by visiting <https://app.smart-sheet.com/b/form/2f3b660e185c4e02bc76930c89aa1823>

3. Reach out to your legislators to thank them for supporting the proposed copper wire legislation and encourage others to as well. Find your legislator: <https://www.gis.lcc.mn.gov/iMaps/districts/>

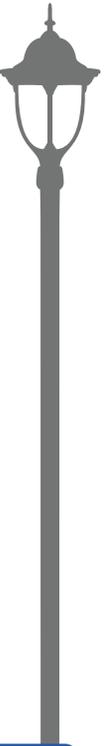
**Sean Kershaw**  
Director of Public Works  
651-266-6099  
sean.kershaw@ci.stpaul.mn.us

**Eric Petersen**  
Intergovernmental Relations Associate  
952-215-8776  
eric.petersen@ci.stpaul.mn.us

The proposed legislation builds off the success of Minnesota's catalytic converter laws in drastically reducing the market demand and reselling of stolen materials. One significant challenge with copper wire and materials is, unlike catalytic converters, they are not registered and hard to track, especially when they are stripped of the insulation. This proposed legislation is gaining attention and support from other cities, municipalities, utilities, and labor organizations.



# Saint Paul Continues to Address Ongoing Wire Theft



## 42K

TOTAL STREET LIGHTS

37,000 street lights and 32,000 street light poles are maintained by Saint Paul Public Works and more than 5,000 street lights are maintained by Saint Paul Parks and Recreation.

## \$1.2M

REPAIRS IN 2023

\$1.2 million was spent by the City of Saint Paul in 2023 to repair and replace wire theft from street lights and signals in the public right of way and park facilities.

## \$250K

REPAIRS IN 2019

In 2019, Saint Paul spent approximately \$250,000 on wire theft issues, **more than quadrupling the non-budgeted expenses** for the city in five years.

## 2K OUTAGES

IN PARK SYSTEM

In February 2024, an **estimated 2,000 street lights in Saint Paul parks were dark** due to wire theft (does not include Public Works maintained street lights).

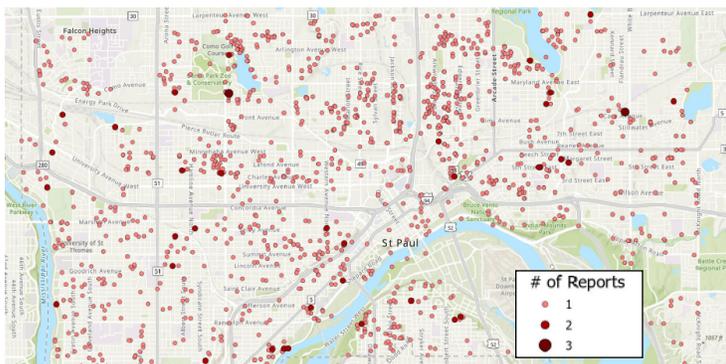
## Comprehensive Strategy to Address Wire Theft:

- Maintaining and repairing damaged street lights and other public infrastructure
- Exploring engineering and infrastructure program changes where possible
- Increasing public education and engagement efforts, encouraging people to report all suspicious activity to 911
- Executing all law enforcement and prosecution strategies currently available
- Collaborating with local, state officials, residents, and businesses to support and pass new proposed state copper metal legislation

During the winter months, Saint Paul did not have a decrease in wire theft.

In 2024, Mayor Carter and Saint Paul City Council approved an additional \$500,000 for Saint Paul Public Works. This includes hiring a seasonal, full-time electrician crew who are dedicated to repairing damaged street lights and other infrastructure.

## Reports of Wire Theft: January-December 2023



## How Are We Preventing Theft?

City staff continues to try a number of different strategies to prevent and deter wire theft, including:

- Welding, epoxying, and banding access panels
- Using security bolts and screws to close and secure the access panels
- Installing new custom molded access panels, replacing broken or stolen panels
- Keeping streetlights on, or “daylighting,” to keep the wires electrified during the daytime
- Using smaller gauge wire, which is less valuable for resale
- Labeling our wire with “City of Saint Paul” to identify the ownership for authorities and recyclers
- Silent alarms
- Exploring changing street light fixtures to solar and/or using overhead wires
- Considering changing street light fixtures to aluminum wiring
- Piloting high access panel street lights (coming in 2024)

To date, these efforts have not prevented wire theft. Some efforts resulted in additional damage to the street light fixtures and/or “moved” the thefts to another part of the city.



To learn more about wire theft and view the full list of FAQs, visit [stpaul.gov/streetlights](http://stpaul.gov/streetlights)

April 6, 2024

Dear Representatives Stephenson and Kotyza-Witthuhn and the Commerce Finance and Policy Committee:

I am reaching out to voice my opposition to HF4461 as it is currently written. I am speaking as an Eden Prairie resident who scraps copper with her partner as a method of reusing resources and recycling for small business income.

While copper wire theft is indeed an expensive crime, the bill as written creates a sweeping piece of legislation with unforeseen impacts on individual Minnesotans and small business owners throughout the state. In addition, it will remove the monetary incentive to recover and recapture copper metal scrap that will instead end up in the landfills, which creates a cascade of problems.

Instead of using the sweeping language of "scrap metal copper," I urge your committee to seek information on the 15-20 grades of copper that are currently used under ISRI.

For a copper license that will have the most impact on preventing wire theft, bare bright and burned wire could be regulated, as those two grades of copper are the only two that would remove marked insulation. Increased penalties on scrapyards that purchase stolen materials from questionable persons will also have a negligible impact on lawful recycling of copper by known members of the scrapping community. Municipalities could mark wire and provenance procedures could be followed at scrapyard level, similar to existing policies on the prohibition of purchasing railroad scrap.

The bill as written will affect tens of thousands of Minnesotans who legitimately recycle copper from demolition, small scale generation, home improvement projects, estate clean outs, and even recovering metal that's being discarded. The legislation as written includes categories such as computer cords, extension cords, holiday lights, silver plated copper, decorative items, pots and pans, and legitimately obtained wire and plumbing from leftover projects.

Many Minnesotans who recycle copper for income are not licensed electricians.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Please reach out if you would like to discuss further.

Regards,  
Elizabeth (Betsy) Gill  
9xxx Crestwood Terrace  
Eden Prairie, MN 55347