



February 24, 2021

Members, House Workforce & Business Development Committee

Dear Chair Noor and Members,

Metro Cities appreciates the opportunity to comment on HF 715 – Greenman, that would support construction careers in Minnesota.

Metro Cities supports the legislation for the reasons of housing affordability as well as for training the future workforce of municipal building officials.

Minnesota cities support a full range of housing needs in their communities to support current and future residents. While residential construction starts were strong in 2020, the three main cost drivers of housing costs (labor, land, construction materials) continue to impact housing affordability. This bill would spur more workers to begin a career in construction and train a larger workforce pool, with the goal of a positive impact on the supply side of labor.

Experienced construction workers are candidates to serve as municipal building officials. Building officials serve essential functions, playing a major role in ensuring that all commercial, residential, public assembly and other buildings are constructed in accordance with the State Building Code. They inspect buildings to protect the safety of building occupants from initial occupants to occupants in future decades.

Cities have found the pool of qualified building official candidates greatly reduced due to previous economic downturns and a reduced construction workforce in Minnesota. The funding in HF 715 would help develop a more robust construction workforce that could in turn serve as municipal building officials in future years.

Thank you for your consideration of this legislation.

Respectfully,

Charlie Vander Aarde
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