



Minnesota Inter-County Association

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Sent Via Email

February 22, 2021

Representative Michael V. Nelson, Chair
House State Government Finance and Elections Committee
585 State Office Building
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Representative Nelson:

The Minnesota Inter-County Association (MICA), and our suburban member counties support regional governance, planning and collaboration for the Twin Cities metropolitan region.

We support inclusion of staggered terms such as those proposed in HF344 (Masin) if those changes are part of a comprehensive governance reform package that also includes more changes to the composition and selection of Council Members.

The role of the Metropolitan Council and of counties has evolved significantly over time, as have the federal law requirements for metropolitan planning organization membership. Counties, for example, have increased responsibility for direct provision of services that have regional significance — such as hazardous and solid waste management, transit funding and transitway development, regional parks, regional highways, water resources planning and watershed management, greenway and bikeway development, farmland and open space preservation, and the regional library system.

Our Association wishes to continue working with Chair Masin, and with all interested legislators on a bi-partisan basis, to achieve a comprehensive reform of Twin Cities metropolitan governance that includes:

- A majority of Metropolitan Council members being elected officials, appointed from within the region; and,
- Each of the seven metropolitan counties directly appointing their own representatives to the Metropolitan Council.

We believe a Metropolitan Council (regional MPO under federal law) composed of a majority of local elected officials would better support collaborative regional transit and transportation planning. In the absence of addressing those aspects Metropolitan Council' governance reform, we must respectfully oppose HF344.

Sincerely,

Matt Massman, *Executive Director*
Minnesota Inter-County Association