



April 30, 2023

Dear Members of the State and Local Government, and Elections Finance Conference Committee:

Metro Cities, representing the shared interests of cities in the metropolitan region, appreciates the opportunity to comment on provisions in the omnibus bills that will be considered by this conference committee.

Elections (HF 1830)

- Metro Cities supports the establishment of the Voting Operations, Technology, and Election Resources (VOTER) Account in Art. 5 § 4 of the House bill, which will provide local governments with ongoing funding for equipment, software, cybersecurity, polling place improvements, staff costs, and other election-related expenses.
- Metro Cities supports Art. 5 § 68 in the House bill that authorizes metropolitan cities with fewer than 400 register voters to conduct an election by mail.
- Metro Cities supports Art 7. § 50 in the Senate bill that establishes a Secretary of State Voting Task Force that includes municipal input and will study voter engagement, education, and improvements to the election system.
- Metro Cities supports provisions in both bills providing protections for election officials from intimidation and interference. Local Governments are struggling to recruit election judges and these provisions will ensure some basic protections for those willing to help serve the state as election workers.
- Metro Cities continues to have concerns over provisions in both bills requiring municipal clerk's offices to remain open certain days and hours during the 18-day early voting period. These provisions do not allow for adequate flexibility and place undue financial and administrative burdens on elections administrators.

State Government Finance (HF 1830)

- Metro Cities supports Art. 2 § 54 of the House bill, which establishes the Infrastructure Resiliency Advisory Task Force and includes local government representatives within its membership.
- Metro Cities supports funding in both bills to provide cybersecurity grants to local units of government.

State and Local Government Policy (HF 1826)

- Metro Cities supports the modification to the open meeting law found in Art. 3 § 1 of the House bill, which removes the state of emergency requirement for the medical exception.
- Metro Cities supports language in both bills that allows cities to issue licenses for hotels.
- Metro Cities supports language in both bills to repeal the compensation limit for employees of political subdivisions.
- Metro Cities opposes Art. 3 § 10 of the House bill, which requires cities to allow the installation of managed natural landscapes on private property. This decision can and should be made at the local level.

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 "Mike Lund". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mike Lund
Government Relations Specialist