

March 7, 2023

Representative Samantha Vang, Chair  
House Agriculture Finance and Policy  
545 State Office Building  
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Chair Vang and House Agriculture Finance and Policy Committee Members:

The Minnesota Inter-County Association (MICA) is a voluntary association representing fifteen of Minnesota's larger and faster growing counties, including four suburban and eleven Greater Minnesota counties.

MICA supports HF2313 authored by Representative Pursell. Broadband has become the primary and foundational way for households to access every day services including education, health care, employment, transportation, and social connectivity. Reliable, high-speed broadband is also a necessity for businesses statewide including restaurants, local merchants, and non-profits. However, recent data shows over 170,000 Minnesota households have no or inadequate broadband access.

The \$138 million appropriated in HF2313 for Border-to-Border Broadband Development grants, along with the increased flexibility to provide larger grants sparsely populated and other regions, is needed to help ensure adequate financial inducements for new and existing providers and expand broadband infrastructure into unserved and underserved areas of the state. We would also support an even higher appropriation level.

County governments have committed significant local resources to expanding Broadband along with local partners, state, and federal funds. Continuous and adequate state appropriations, like those included in HF2313, also support Minnesota communities fully leveraging federal funds.

Thank you for the opportunity share our support for expanding critical access to broadband for business to achieve universal, equitable high-speed internet access.

Sincerely,



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