



DEDICATED TO A STRONG GREATER MINNESOTA

October 13, 2020

VIA E-MAIL ONLY

Dear Members of the LCC Subcommittee on Water Policy:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the legislative proposals you will be considering for the 2021 legislative session. Ensuring that drinking water is safe and protecting Minnesota's rivers and lakes through our wastewater and stormwater systems are among the most important functions of our cities. Multiple proposals you are considering will help our cities perform that work better.

As you consider which bills to prioritize, we ask that you give serious consideration to the following:

- **Advisory Council on Water Supply Systems and Wastewater Treatment Facilities**
HF3971 (Torkelson, Fischer, Heintzeman), SF 3958 (Weber, Wiger, Eaton, Eken)
We ask you to support the reestablishment of this advisory council. Even before the pandemic, our system operators were facing worker shortages and constant changes in treatment technologies. The previous council brought together experienced and knowledgeable operators to help ensure that certification requirements reflect the latest technology and the need to bring new operators into the field. Bringing the council back will help our cities continue to protect Minnesota's waters.
- **Disposable wipes**
Over the years, our sewer systems have been experiencing more frequent and costly back-ups, breakdowns, and blockages due to wipes being flushed down toilets. Despite this pervasiveness of this problem, legislation has not advanced on this issue. We urge you to help move legislation forward and work with us in the future to address the problems caused by so-called "flushable" wipes.
- **Chloride Reduction**
HF3967 (Heintzeman, Brand, Fischer), SF3413 (Weber, Eaton, Wiger, Eken)
Addressing chloride in wastewater is an issue that many of our cities will be facing over the coming years. The challenge is that it is not technologically or economically feasible for municipal wastewater treatment plants to treat for chloride. The process for removing chloride—reverse osmosis—is prohibitively expensive, energy intensive, and potentially harmful to the environment because of the need to dispose of the resulting salty brine. This challenge is compounded by the fact that many of the most effected cities are small, with populations of 5,000 or less.

We support the efforts proposed in both HF3967 and in SF3413 to address chloride reduction at the local levels.

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- **Pollutant Trading**

HF3947 (Poston, Fischer), SF 3956 (Wiger, Eaton)

With the myriad of water quality challenges facing the state, it is apparent that to make any progress the state must innovate on how it reduces water pollution. Pollutant trading offers such an opportunity. We support legislation that would help create a third-party water-quality broker system and encourage a pilot program for pollutant trading.

We appreciate the opportunity to submit comments for your consideration and hope we can work together to solve the water challenges our cities face. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at mayor@cityoflittlefalls.com or our representative, Elizabeth Wefel, at eawefel@flaherty-hood.com or (651) 259-1924.

Sincerely,



Greg Zylka

Mayor, City of Little Falls

CGMC President