



2023 Metro Cities Policy Committees

Metro Cities 2023 policy committee process will begin with first policy committee meetings in July, and your participation is encouraged! Committees will recommend the association's legislative policies for 2024. Participation is open to member city elected officials and staff, and committee descriptions and dates are on the [website](#). Please be sure to [sign up](#) for the committee(s) you wish to attend. This will help us keep rosters accurate. We look forward to seeing you this summer!

Metro Cities Breakfast at LMC Annual Conference

Metro Cities will host a breakfast at the League of Minnesota Cities 2023 Annual Conference in Duluth, from **8:00-9:00 a.m. Friday, June 23. Breakfast will be held at the Duluth Entertainment Convention Center (DECC)**. This is a great opportunity to connect with other metro city officials. We hope you will join us! Please visit <https://www.lmc.org/learning-events/events/league-events/2023-lmc-annual-conference/> for more information.

Omnibus Bills / Conference Committees

As the legislative session enters its final few weeks, conference committees have begun meeting to reconcile bills. Below are updates on omnibus bills that are of interest to Metro Cities. The legislative session must conclude by May 22.

Taxes

Tax conferees have been appointed and the Taxes conference committee will hold its first meeting Friday afternoon. Senate conferees are Senators Rest, Klein, Dibble, Hauschild, and Weber and House conferees are Representatives Gomez, Lislegard, Agbaje, L. Lee, and Davids. Metro Cities will post the 'side by side' comparison of bills and other information once it is made available.

Transportation ([HF 2887](#))

The transportation conference committee met on Wednesday and Thursday, with another meeting scheduled for Friday morning. Both the House and Senate bills raise new revenue for transportation and provide direct funding to cities of all sizes. The House bill contains a 75-cent retail delivery fee whereas the Senate bill does not. Both bills impose a sales tax for transit within the seven-county metropolitan area, but with different rates. Both bills contain problematic provisions that statutorily require certain climate action content in local comprehensive plans of metropolitan cities. Finally, both bills contain language regarding changes to regional governance but take different approaches in doing so.

On Thursday, the committee adopted several same or similar provisions contained in either bill. On Friday, the committee adopted a slate of additional same or similar provisions. These include language establishing an Advisory Council on Traffic Safety, reporting requirements for the SouthWest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) project, and the creation of a pilot program to enhance the hours of service for Metro Mobility. Click [HERE](#) to view the list of provisions adopted on Friday. Note: The highways for habitat language was removed from the list of adopted provisions. The next scheduled meeting for the transportation conference committee is Monday, 5/8.

Click [HERE](#) to view a list of those provisions. Click [HERE](#) to view side by sides of the House and Senate language. Click [HERE](#) for a comparison spreadsheet. Click [HERE](#) to view a comparison summary for both bills.

Conferees: Representatives Hornstein, Koegel, Tabke, Brand, and Petersburg; Senators Dibble, Morrison, Carlson, McEwen, and Jasinski.

State and Local Government, and Elections (HF 1830)

The omnibus state government finance bill conference committee met throughout the week. Both the House and Senate bills establish a procedure for early voting, prohibit the intimidation and interference of election officials, and provide cybersecurity funding for local governments. The House bill establishes an Infrastructure and Resilience Advisory Task Force. On Thursday, the committee [adopted several elections provisions](#). The committee plans to meet again on Friday.

Click [HERE](#) to view side by sides of the House and Senate bills. Click [HERE](#) to view the House budget spreadsheet and [HERE](#) to view the Senate budget spreadsheet. Click [HERE](#) for the House summary and [HERE](#) for the Senate summary.

Omnibus state and local government policy bills have been passed by both bodies. [HF 1826 \(Klevorn\)](#) includes language removing the state of emergency requirement for the medical exception to the open meeting law to be used. The bill also requires cities to allow managed natural landscapes on private property. Both the House bill and the Senate bill, [HF 1826 \(Murphy\)](#), repeal the salary cap for local employees. The conference committee for HF 1830 will also be tasked with reconciling differing positions contained in HF 1826. Click [HERE](#) for the House summary and [HERE](#) for the Senate summary.

Conferees: Representatives Klevorn, Freiberg, Greenman, Huot, and Nash; Senators Murphy, Carlson, Mitchell, Westlin, and Boldon.

Housing (HF 2335)

The Housing conference committee met on Tuesday and walked through the side-by-side [spreadsheet](#) to compare the two bills, as well as the side by side [language](#) of the bills. The committee then took public testimony, and Metro Cities Government Relations Specialist Ania McDonnell testified in front of the committee, sharing support for a variety of the programs funded in the bill, as well as opposition to the inclusion of the metropolitan regional sales tax included in the House bill. Metro Cities also [submitted a letter](#) to the committee. The committee has yet to meet again since Tuesday. We have heard that this bill is likely close to a final agreement from negotiations behind closed doors. We will keep you updated as we hear more.

Conferees: Representatives Howard, Agbaje, and Johnson; Senators Port, Mohamed, and Housley.

Public Safety (SF 2909)

The judiciary and public safety conference committee met throughout the week, but no provisions have yet been adopted for the conference committee report. Both the House and Senate bills contain funding for community violence prevention, equipment, and retention and recruitment efforts. The bills fund these areas in significantly different amounts. Click [HERE](#) for side by sides of the House and Senate language. Click [HERE](#) to view the House budget spreadsheet. Click [HERE](#) for the Senate budget spreadsheet. Click [HERE](#) for the House summary and [HERE](#) for the Senate summary.

Conferees: Representatives Moller, Feist, Becker-Finn, Frazier, and Curran; Senators Latz, Oumou Verbeten, Pappas, Seeberger, and Westlin.

Legacy (HF 1999)

The omnibus Legacy bill conference committee met on Friday to adopt their final agreement. The bill includes funding for water infrastructure projects and funding for the metropolitan regional parks and trails system. Click [HERE](#) to view a side by side of the House and Senate bill language. Click [HERE](#) to view the budget spreadsheet for the agreement that was adopted by conferees.

Conferees: Representatives Lillie, Hussein, Her, Cha, and Backer; Senators Hawj, Morrison, Mohamed, Pha, and Housley.

Environment, Climate, and Energy (HF 2310)

The omnibus environment, natural resources, climate, and energy finance and policy bill conference committee held regular meetings this week. These bills include funding for PFAS, urban forests, parks and trails, climate action grants, and a state fund to help provide the required match for federal grants for energy projects.

Several provisions from either bill have been adopted as the committee slowly builds its eventual conference committee report. Some provisions of note that have been included are the duty to notify public of wastewater pollution discharges, changes to the DNR's water law enforcement powers, and language from the Senate bill relating to the White Bear Lake court case and the water-use permits for surrounding communities. Click [HERE](#) to view the most recent policy tracking sheet (as of Thursday 5/4). [Language adopted Thursday](#) evening included provisions related to PFAS, including product bans and health risk limits for PFOS beginning in 2026. Another agreement adopted by the conference committee includes funding for the metropolitan regional parks and trails system and funding for grants to cities for [inflow and infiltration](#).

Click [HERE](#) to view side by sides of the House and Senate bills. Click [HERE](#) for the Environment and Natural Resources budget spreadsheet, [HERE](#) for the ENRTF spreadsheet, and [HERE](#) for the Energy and RDA comparison spreadsheet.

Conferees: Representatives Hansen, Acomb, Hollins, Jordan, and Kraft; Senators Hawj, Frenz, McEwen, Xiong, and Coleman.

Jobs and Labor (Economic Development) (SF 3035)

The jobs and labor conference committee met on Tuesday to review the comparison [spreadsheet](#) as well as the [side-by-side language](#) of both bills. On Wednesday, they took testimony from organizations that were not included in both bills, and adopted some provisions that are identical in both bills, see the same and similar provisions [HERE](#). Metro Cities [submitted a letter](#) to the committee in support of funding for programs in the bill. The committee was scheduled to meet on Thursday; however, the hearing was canceled. The committee is slated to meet again today to continue their work.

Conferees: Representatives Hassan, Nelson, Berg and Olson; Senators Champion, McEwen, Mohamed, Hauschild, and Gustafson.

Labor Policy

The omnibus Labor policy bill passed the House floor on Monday night, and the Senate bill passed the Senate floor last week. These bills include language of concern to Metro Cities, allowing religious institutions to establish a residential settlement as a form of permanent housing. Click [HERE](#) for the House language, and click [HERE](#) for the Senate language. It is likely that a conference committee will be formed to address the differences between the two bills, but the conference committee members have yet to be named.

Adult-Use Cannabis ([HF 100](#))

A conference committee for HF 100, the bill to legalize adult-use cannabis in Minnesota, has been formed, but no meetings have taken place. Compared to the House bill, the Senate version of the bill contains more robust local control language including a zoning compliance requirement for those seeking cannabis licenses and population-based minimums for the number of cannabis retail stores in each jurisdiction. The Senate language also includes revenue sharing for local governments in recognition of the additional costs for cities and counties should adult-use cannabis be legalized. Click [HERE](#) for side by side comparisons of the House and Senate language.

Conferees: Representatives Stephenson, Hanson, J., Kozlowski, Hollins, and West; Senators Port, Oumou Verbeten, Murphy, Pha, and Rasmusson.

Bills of Note

[HF 3298](#), Norris/[SF 2416](#), Gustafson: Bill establishes public safety aid program for cities and counties.

[HF 3302](#), Daudt: Bill requires public hearings for certain trunk highway and transit projects.

[SF 3322](#), Housley/[HF 3287](#), Wiens: Bill establishes a temporary reduction in the gas tax rate.

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