



March 22, 2024

Chair Stephenson and Members of the Commerce Finance and Policy Committee,

Metro Cities, representing the shared interests of cities across the metropolitan area at the Legislature and Executive Branch, appreciates the opportunity to comment on HF 4077 – Stephenson, the omnibus Commerce policy bill. Metro Cities supports language in the bill that would allow local governments to require franchise fees from a provider furnishing broadband and to receive compensation for the use of the public right-of-way.

Cities play a vital role in achieving significantly higher broadband speeds. Local units of government contribute to increasing broadband capacity and ensuring internet connectivity, reliability, and availability.

Metro Cities policies support the ability of local officials to manage and protect public rights-of-way and to collect compensation for the use of public assets. Metro Cities policies also support state policies and programs that substantially increase speed and capacity of broadband services statewide, including facilitating solutions at the local level. Incentives which support private sector service providers to respond to local or regional needs, and to collaborate with cities to deploy broadband infrastructure will support the ability to meet immediate and future local needs.

Thank you for your consideration of this letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ania McDonnell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ania McDonnell  
Government Relations Specialist