

March 27, 2023

Senator Melissa Wiklund
Chair of the Committee on Health and Human Services

Re: SF 2152—Mann: Local public health emergency preparedness and response capabilities appropriation

Dear Chair Wiklund and Members,

The City of Minneapolis appreciates the opportunity to comment in support of SF 2152. Emergency Preparedness is a mandated function of local public health departments, yet we often don't have the resources to adequately respond. State funding is sorely needed. The Minneapolis Health Department has been in constant response mode since 2018 dealing with encampments, a hotel fire and most recently, the COVID pandemic.

We rely solely on Federal funds and receive about \$300,000 in Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) funds annually. That funding has been cut almost in half since 2009. We are grateful for short term COVID funding but know that this funding will end in 2024. The current federal PHEP funds barely cover staff expenses and are not enough to provide needed funding to community emergency preparedness partners. We rely on seven community-based organizations to help with emergencies and often these partners have the trust of residents more so than governmental agencies like the City. We lack the funding however to pay them. Investing state funds in emergency preparedness will not only increase the capacity of preparedness programs, but also let us better reach our communities.

We urge you to support SF 2152 as well as the Governor's proposal to provide \$8.4 million to local public health departments.

Sincerely,



Heidi Ritchie
Deputy Commissioner of Health
City of Minneapolis