



March 23, 2023

Re: SF 2471 – Micro unit dwellings authorized at sacred settlements.

Chair McEwen and members of the Senate Labor Committee:

The League of Minnesota Cities appreciates the opportunity to comment on the city concerns with SF 2471. Housing instability and homelessness is a growing concern in the State of Minnesota and in cities across the state. Providing solutions and adequate resources to address housing instability and homelessness is a goal that is shared by Minnesota cities and cities continue to work diligently to address this important issue.

While we have worked diligently with the bill proponents, SF 2471 creates a number of questions and concerns for cities, primarily around local land use planning and zoning authorities and how they are used to balance land use desires of all residents and property owners and to preserve city ability to protect public health, safety, and welfare.

The current language in SF 2471 as amended by the author's amendment reflects the outcome of numerous conversations with the bill's proponents over the past two years and seeks to address some of the concerns raised by cities. We appreciate the inclusion of additional definitions and minimum standards that apply to sacred settlements and micro units, minimum setback requirements to ensure emergency services access, and standards to ensure livability as well as reporting to ensure resident eligibility and an effective date of January 2024 to provide timing for city councils and residents to consider this novel use.

However, concerns still exist with the requirement that all 855 cities regardless of size and staffing be equipped to address and respond to a novel permitted use without the ability to determine whether it has adequate resources to support sacred settlement residents and without an ability to respond to resident input. We would recommend that there be a provision for cities to opt out of this program. Also, "appropriately insured" remains undefined, which would be problematic as cities work to ensure minimum conditions are meant for sacred settlements.

We have been working with the bill author and proponents to look at ways their objectives might be addressed without causing unintended consequences and to hopefully find some suitable compromise on areas where we differ in our approach. We will continue to do so as the bill progresses. Thank you for spending time discussing this issue and for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Daniel Lightfoot'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent 'D' and 'L'.

Daniel Lightfoot
Intergovernmental Relations Representative
League of Minnesota Cities