



April 2, 2025

Re: HF 1917 - Definition of public official in a city or county modified

Chair Quam and members of the House Elections Finance and Government Operations committee:

The League of Minnesota Cities appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on HF 1917 which proposes amendments to the definition of a city or county official under the Minnesota Data Practices Act (MGDPA). On behalf of our 841 member cities, we believe this bill would have significant consequences for small cities across Minnesota.

Minn. Stat. § 13.43 classifies various types of personnel data under the MGDPA. Subdivision 2(e) relates specifically to the classification of data specific data on public officials following a completed investigation into complaints or charges against them that resulted in discipline, resignation, or termination. At present, this provision defines a public official in a city as:

- The top three highest paid employees in cities over 15,000 in population; and
- Managers, chiefs, heads or directors, and any equivalent position in cities over 7,500 in population.

This bill eliminates the 7,500-population threshold, affecting 732 cities that are currently exempt from this section. These cities were purposefully exempted in attempt to protect the data on staff, especially those in small cities, that may fit the definition of a public official but have little actual authority over city business. This change would make substantially more data on any employee disciplinary matter public. This bill would also strain cities already limited resources and divert attention from other critical services that cities provide to their communities.

Thank you for your consideration of the League's concerns with the language in HF 1917. We look forward to working with Representative Anderson as this bill progresses.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Tori Kee'.

Intergovernmental Relations Representative & Attorney
League of Minnesota Cities