

FRESHWATER

April 14, 2026

Sen. Sandra L. Pappas
Senate Committee on Capital Investment
1100 Minnesota Senate Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55155

Re: Support of SF4457 and Water Regionalization Planning

Chair Pappas and committee members,

Strengthening water and wastewater systems serving small and rural communities is essential for healthy communities and economies across Minnesota. A recent white paper by two national organizations, the Rural Community Assistance Partnership (RCAP) and the National Rural Water Association (NRWA), entitled “Regional Partnership Program: A Community-Led Approach,” supports voluntary, community-driven regionalization as a strategy to meet community needs while preserving community identity and public accountability.

Freshwater supports efforts for community-led regionalization of water and wastewater services. Regionalization is an effective tool for sharing resources to better address the needs of replacing aging infrastructure, managing workforce shortages, meeting regulatory requirements, maintaining affordability, and handling rising operational and capital costs. Grants for planning assistance would help rural utilities develop studies and access technical expertise as needed to evaluate and pursue regional solutions.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback.



Michelle Stockness, PE

Executive Director, Freshwater