

Office of the Superintendent

District Office
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St. Francis Area Schools

March 17, 2026

Tom Emmer
326 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Letter of support for inclusion of East Bethel water and sewer treatment systems

To Representative Emmer::

The purpose of this letter is to express the district's support for including water and sewer systems for the City of East Bethel in state and/or federal funding requests. Building these systems is essential to the school district and city because of current issues with school district water and septic systems as well as the desire to provide an increased tax base for the district.

Currently, East Bethel Elementary School and Cedar Creek Elementary School are serviced by well and septic systems on district property. Maintaining private water and sewer systems has been problematic, so the district is interested in considering city-provided services. In addition to the present need to upgrade the schools' septic pumping station, both schools were negatively impacted by the tannins in our well water. The cloudy water that students and staff were pulling out of filtered water stations caused a level of alarm and panic; temporary remediation efforts necessitated a strong response from the school district, including shutting off all drinking fountains, providing bottled water, installing a new water softener system at Cedar Creek, and conducting multiple water quality sampling by state and local entities. Parents and community members questioned whether the schools provided a safe environment for their children. Further, it is increasingly challenging to find staff members with the special wastewater treatment license and rural water certification.

Building the systems will also help the area with planned and needed growth, which will eventually help with the tax impact on local residences and businesses. In particular, the district recently lost an operating levy referendum request, partly because of increased taxes in the cities within the school district. Providing a stronger tax base will eventually help with the tax burden for residents of the school district.

Once again, the school district wholeheartedly supports the inclusion of water and sewer systems for the City of East Bethel in state and/or federal funding requests.

Sincerely,

Karsten Anderson

Karsten Anderson
Superintendent

**CITY OF EAST BETHEL
EAST BETHEL, MINNESOTA**

RESOLUTION NO. 2024-32

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING HF 5189 AND SF 5309

WHEREAS, ISD 15 School District has approached the City of East Bethel to inquire as to the possibility of collaborating to establish a connection to City utilities: and,

WHEREAS, the current well and septic systems the School is currently using have proven to be problematic, requiring upgrades to their septic pumping station: and,

WHEREAS, the well water has shown signs of contamination: and,


WHEREAS, contaminants have been found in close proximity, consisting of VOCs (DCA, methylene chloride, TCE), benzene, tannins, radium and manganese, in city wells,

WHEREAS, the Minnesota Department of Health issued a notice of designation of special well construction area in the vicinity of the East Bethel Sanitary Landfill, identified as east ½ of Section 8, the west ½ of Section 9, the west ½ of the northwest quarter of Section 9, and the west ½ southeast corner of Section 9, Township 33 North, Range 23 West. Beginning at the intersection of State Highway 65 and Sims Road Northwest, the boundary of the Special Well Construction Area extends north on State Highway 65 approximately one mile to 221st Ave Northeast, then east one mile, then west approximately one and one quarter miles, then south approximately one mile, then west approximately one and one quarter miles to the intersection of State Highway 65 and Sims Road: and;


NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF EAST BETHEL, MINNESOTA THAT: The East Bethel City Council and Mayor fully supports the bonding request for 10.5 million dollars, as identified in HF 5189 (Representative Scott) and SF5309 (Senator Bahr), for the purposes of investing in predesign and design, to construct City water and sewer infrastructure necessary to connect East Bethel Elementary and Cedar Creek Elementary Schools.

Adopted on the 8th of April, 2024 by the City Council of the City of East Bethel.

CITY OF EAST BETHEL


Kevin Lewis, Mayor

ATTEST:


Matt Look, City Administrator

