

January 17, 2023

Senate Energy, Utilities, Environment and Climate Committee  
Senator Nick Frentz, Chair  
3109 Minnesota Senate Bldg.  
St. Paul, MN 55155

RE: Senate File 4

Dear Chair Frentz and Members of the Committee,

The Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC), Minnesota Inter-County Association (MICA), and Minnesota Solid Waste Administrators Association (SWAA) represent the interests of county and waste district professional staff. The Ramsey/Washington Recycling & Energy (R&E) Board is a joint powers board composed of commissioners from Ramsey and Washington counties. We advocate for policies that improve and promote responsible waste management and reduce the environmental impacts of solid waste.

**We are writing today because our organizations support the efforts of Senate File 4 (SF4) to advance clean energy objectives and associated benefits to human health and the protection of our environment, natural resources and the climate. As written, however, the bill will impact solid waste management in a manner that will increase long term greenhouse gas emissions in Minnesota, contrary to the stated goals of this legislation.** We ask that the author and members of this committee work with us to strengthen the climate outcomes of this legislation by addressing solid waste management issues.

Counties have responded to state policy direction and invested significant local funds into reducing, recycling and composting waste, while working to meet the state's mandated recycling goals. Some counties have also invested significant funds in resource recovery facilities to recover energy from waste that cannot be reduced or recycled. This approach ranks higher than landfilling on the waste management hierarchy established in state law as it creates less overall risk to public health and the environment. Waste managed in these facilities prevents methane emissions from landfills, reducing the climate impacts of waste management.

Resource recovery facilities operate in six rural MN counties, as well as three in metro areas. More than 30 Minnesota counties send waste to these facilities as part of their integrated waste management plans that prioritize waste reduction, reuse, and recycling. It is extremely likely that most of these facilities, if not all, would be unable to continue to operate under the conditions set forward in this legislation. The loss of these facilities would certainly have negative environmental outcomes that are not recognized in SF4 as currently written, including increasing greenhouse gas emissions.

AMC, MICA, SWAA and Ramsey/Washington R&E are working with the state to promote strategies toward a zero-waste future. At that time, resources recovery may no longer be needed. However, as long as solid waste is generated

in the state, these facilities will play a critical role in its management and in climate and environmental protection.

**We stand ready to work with the committee to explore options that will continue to advance the objectives of SF4 to ensure that Minnesota has a comprehensive strategy for meeting our climate and clean energy goals through a comprehensive approach that considers energy and waste policy.**

Sincerely,



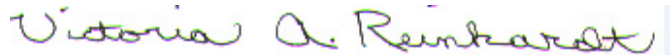
Brian Martinson  
Policy Analyst, Association of Minnesota Counties



Laine Sletta, Brown County  
President, Minnesota Solid Waste Administrators Association



Matt Massman, Executive Director  
Minnesota Inter-County Association



Commissioner Victoria Reinhardt, Ramsey County  
Ramsey/Washington Recycling & Energy Board