

100%

100% Campaign
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March 7, 2023

Chair Murphy and Members of the Committee,

We are writing to express our support for Senate File 1180 (Pappas), Senate File 2156 (Murphy), and Senate File 1937 (Hawj).

As we transition to a more equitable and clean energy future, we have the opportunity to improve the lives of Minnesotans. This transition means more jobs, cleaner air, better buildings, and new transportation options. To get there, we'll need to rethink how we build and how we engage Minnesotans to make sure our state's investments and decisions best serve the public. These three bills do that.

First, we support Senator Pappas' Senate File 1180, a bill supporting a study on the impacts of projected weather trends on state and local government buildings. Minnesota is already experiencing the impacts of our changing climate. Evaluating the risks those impacts pose for publicly owned infrastructure is more than sensible. When we make capital improvements, we expect those investments to stand and serve Minnesotans for decades. This study will provide policymakers and the public with a science-based evaluation of how we can lower energy costs, harden infrastructure, and protect natural systems.

Second, we support Senate File 2156, Senator Murphy's bill to establish the 'Buy Clean and Buy Fair Minnesota Act'. The bill would require that materials used in the construction (or major renovation) of state buildings over 50,000 square feet or trunk highways include a Type III Environmental Product Declaration, as certified by the International Organization for Standard's 14025 Standard. Meeting this standard would help ensure that the steel, concrete, and asphalt paving materials that Minnesota uses have lower lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions. The bill provides a pilot program, a waiver process, grants to businesses to support compliance, and a requirement to report back to the legislature in 2025. All of these will help ensure the program meets its goals.

Finally, we support Senator Hawj's Senate File 1937, a bill to reinstate the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's Citizens Board. This board served Minnesota well from 1967 until 2015. It provided the public an opportunity to participate directly in critical decisions about how our MPCA can best protect the people and places we love. This bill updates the board to better reflect the full geographic, gender, and racial diversity of Minnesota.

Transitioning to a net zero emissions economy by 2050 is a generational challenge for Minnesotans. It's one we can meet, if we enact legislation like this.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Aurora Vautrin

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Legislative Director

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