

## S.F. No. 718 – Establishing Highways for Habit Program

**Author:** Senator Foungh Hawj

**Prepared by:** Tim Greenfield, Senate Counsel (651/296-3801)

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**S.F. 718** establishes the highways for habitat program and appropriates money for the program and living snow fences.

**Section 1 [Highways for Habitat Program]** creates a highways for habitat program for the Department of Transportation’s integrated roadside vegetation management plan. [Proposed Minn. Stat. §160.2325]

**Subdivision 1 [Definitions]** defines terms.

**Subdivision 2 [Program establishment]** establishes the program which requires the commissioner of transportation’s integrated roadside vegetation management plan to include pollinator habitats and wildlife buffers.

**Subdivision 3 [General requirements]** provides what is included in the highways for habitat program. The commissioner of transportation must (1) identify highways for habitat installations; (2) erect signage that identifies habitat projects and clearly marks habitat management restrictions; (3) train MnDOT personnel and pesticide contractors on the use of integrated roadside vegetation management; (4) work with the commissioners of natural resources and agriculture to reduce the use of mowing and pesticides; (5) maintain a website on the program; and (6) identify future funding sources for the program.

**Subdivision 4 [Management standards]** directs the commissioner of transportation, in consultation with the Department of Natural Resources and the Board of Water and Soil Resources, to develop integrated roadside vegetation management standards and practices. Specifies elements for the standards.

**Section 2 [Appropriation; Highways for Habitat program]** appropriates money from the general fund for the habitat for highways program as a one-time appropriation.

**Section 3 [Appropriations; Living Snow Fence implementation]** defines “living snow fence implementation” and appropriates money for the commissioner of transportation from the general fund to install living snow fences under the state road construction budget. Appropriates money from the trunk highway fund to maintain the installation of living snow fences.