



"To promote a zero-waste society that advocates for reducing waste, sustainably reusing resources and less landfill use."

February 21, 2023

RE: SCORE Grants (SF 1587; Dibble)

Dear Chair Rest and Senate Tax Committee Members:

On behalf of the Minnesota Resource Recovery Association (MRRRA) trade group representing nine waste-to-energy facilities across the state, the MRRRA Board of Directors urges your support for SF 1587 (Dibble) to amend the Solid Waste Management Tax (SWMT) revenue allocation.

MRRRA Supports Efforts to Permanently Increase the Environment Fund and its contributions to SCORE Grants (SF 1587). SF 1587 advances MRRRA's 2023 legislative priorities agenda in support of efforts "to allocate all revenue generated by the SWMT to waste management activities and increase SCORE funding."

- Minnesota Statute 115A places the responsibility of local solid waste management on Minnesota Counties.
- In 2021, of the \$97 million generated from the SWMT less than \$18 million was passed directly on to counties through SCORE Grants (less than 20%).
- The General Fund received 30% or \$29 million from the SWMT.
- SCORE language and (a tenth of what is needed in) additional funding was included in the 2022 tax conference committee report.
- The current state budget surplus offers a critical opportunity to right-size SCORE grant levels to meet the challenges counties face to increase waste reduction, reuse, and recycling of valuable materials.

MRRRA Fully Supports the Long-Established Waste Hierarchy of Reduce, Reuse, Recycle Toward Achieving 'Zero-Waste' Goals and Minimal Landfill Disposal. Further, SCORE grant funding levels have remained relatively flat, and well below normal inflation.

- MRRRA's members represent 31 of the most progressive counties in solid waste management. Our members will directly benefit from re-allocation of SWMT revenues from the general fund to the environmental fund.
- We trust that fully dedicating all SWMT revenues to the environment fund will increase the amount of funding to SCORE grants disbursed from the environment fund to Counties. This will support a more sustainable path forward for reducing waste streams and achieving state recycling goals.



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- MRRA urges the Legislature to finally and fully allocate the above-mentioned 30 percent in SWMT revenues to solid waste management activities found under Minn. Stats. 115A.557, as proposed in S.F. 1587 (Dibble). We stand ready to work with policymakers, state agencies, communities, and the private sector to act on public and environmental health issues in 2023.

Sincerely,

Chris McConn
Board Chair, MRRA