



**STATE OF MINNESOTA**  
Office of Minnesota Secretary of State  
Steve Simon

March 22, 2023

Senate Taxes Committee  
Minnesota State Senate  
G-15 Capitol, 75 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Senate Taxes Committee Members:

I write to share my support of ongoing and sustained state funding to Minnesota's election system. While my office serves as chief election official, the day-to-day work of administering our elections is done at the local level. These local elections offices purchase voting equipment, print ballots, hire election judges, process voter registrations, and count every single voter's ballot.

Local governments across the country struggle with how to finance the escalating costs of election administration. The business of elections has gotten more complex – and more expensive. This bill acknowledges that national reality. To ensure that every voter in every county has a resourced, secure, and modern election system, ongoing and reliable funding is critical.

This legislation does present a shift in the work of the Office of Secretary of State, adding a comprehensive grant administration responsibility on an ongoing basis. I appreciate Chair Rest including funding for our office to administer this grant, however, as outlined in the fiscal note, the office will need to hire a full-time grant administrator to effectively manage this work. Additionally, the office will need to expand our staff on a temporary basis every odd year to process grant applications from and disburse funds to as many as 87 counties, 853 cities, and 1,790 townships. The current bill, as amended, does not fully accommodate that need. I look forward to continuing to work with the Chair to find a solution that meets these needs.

The legislature is doing significant work to strengthen and modernize Minnesota's election laws, and I am glad to see that the committee is considering this needed financial investment as well.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steve Simon".

Steve Simon  
SECRETARY OF STATE