



## District 11

**Cathy Drummond**  
District Director

**Jeff Hartford**  
Assistant to the  
Director

March 28, 2024

Senate Environment, Climate, and Legacy Committee  
Minnesota Senate Bldg.  
95 University Avenue West  
Room 1150  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Founj Hawj and members of the Committee:

The United Steelworkers (USW) District 11 would like to thank the committee for their hard work this session to protect Minnesota's environment, now and for future generations. We are writing today to urge you to pass S.F. 4523 (H.F. 4550), which would establish the Critical Materials Recovery Advisory Task Force.

The Critical Materials Recovery Advisory Task Force will have the responsibility of determining emerging recycling technologies, evaluating recovery costs, and identifying needed infrastructure, end-of-life-management options for products, and ways to prevent the improper disposal of critical materials. This task force will create new jobs and opportunities for workers in the state and help grow and sustain Minnesota's economy for years to come.

Our union has long advocated for decreasing our reliance on foreign countries for materials crucial to our supply chains that we could recover, recycle, or process here in Minnesota and in the United States. In Minnesota alone, there is over 266 million pounds of e-waste available for recycling every year, which would greatly decrease our country's reliance on foreign products if we were able to tap into this potential.

Currently, China and the Democratic Republic of Congo are two of the biggest providers of critical materials in the world, but they use unethical labor practices—like forced and child labor—to obtain these critical materials. The United States has some of the best labor and environmental standards in the world, which should be looked to as a model for advanced manufacturing.

We believe it is essential to mine, recover, and recycle the critical materials our country needs domestically. That is why USW District 11 urges the passage of S.F. 4523 (H.F. 4550) by the committee to ensure that the critical materials our country needs to make various products are obtained responsibly and continue to support good-paying, family-sustaining jobs into the future. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Cathy Drummond  
Director, District 11

United Steel, Paper and Forestry, Rubber, Manufacturing, Energy, Allied Industrial and Service Workers International Union

3433 Broadway Street NE, Suite 315, Minneapolis, MN 55413 • 612-623-8003 • 612-331-4266 (fax) • [www.usw.org](http://www.usw.org)