



April 9, 2024

The Honorable Fong Hawj, Chair
Senate Environment, Climate and Legacy
3231 Minnesota Senate Bldg
St. Paul, MN 55155

The Honorable Justin Eichorn, Ranking Minority Member
Senate Environment, Climate and Legacy
235 Minnesota Senate Bldg
St. Paul, MN 55155

Re: Opposition to SF 4944 (Gustafson) Management of Food Waste

Dear Chair Hawj, Ranking Minority Member Eichorn and Members of the Committee:

We appreciate the opportunity to weigh in with our opposition to SF 4944, which establishes surplus and food waste management programs. SF 4944 will significantly impact many small businesses and organizations across Minnesota, from grocery stores, to retailers, restaurants, event spaces, schools, hospitals and more. Any organization that produces or manages food will be subjected to the reporting requirements outlined, without any consideration for their capabilities or capacities.

Many organizations are not prepared or equipped to take on the level of reporting required as outlined by January 01, 2025. While some organizations have strong tracking mechanisms in place, many small businesses are not prepared to separate, weigh and track food waste and scraps. Additionally, it may require additional storage containers when every square foot is already tightly accounted for in their space. Plus, there is a lack of clarity and lead time to prepare businesses and organizations to track and measure the waste. Does the state currently have adequate resources to manage the waste if contracted by every business and organization impacted?

Furthermore, should a business find success year after year, their food waste will increase given the volume of production or sales. The state should not punish businesses who find success through growing their business. Instead, we should find opportunities to work with that business to encourage growth and explore sustainable practices around food waste.

Also, this bill does not account for the positive progress many organizations have made towards waste reduction, particularly through food waste. Many of our businesses and organizations partner with non-profits and food banks to ensure excess product is given to those who need it most. We believe it is critical to spend time educating businesses on the benefits of partnering with food recovery organizations and offer incentives, not onerous regulations.

Sincerely,

Fueling Minnesota, Hospitality Minnesota, Midwest Food Producers Association, Minnesota Association of Convention & Visitors Bureaus, Minnesota Agri-Growth Council, Minnesota Chamber, Minnesota Grocers Association, Minnesota Hospital Association, Minnesota Licensed Beverage Association, Minnesota Retailers, Minnesota Service Station & Convenience Store Association, National Federation of Independent Businesses