

# Minnesota Association of Townships



*Executive Director:*  
Jeff Krueger

*General Counsel:*  
Steve Fenske

*In-House Counsel:*  
Graham Berg-Moberg  
Madeline Cash

Dear Chair Dzierdzic and Members of the Committee,

The Minnesota Association of Townships (MAT) represents the approximately 9,000 Township officers serving the citizens of Minnesota. We value and support open government and celebrate the Open Meeting Law's function in securing that value for Minnesotans.

Nevertheless, we write to express our concerns with SF 4132. Our unit of Government is very small, and voter focused—our members are not professional politicians and are therefore unusually dependent on professional advice when it comes to compliance with our obligations. We need the level of candor with our legal advisors that privacy can create. Moreover, we are concerned that the bill does not adequately provide for cases of good faith mistakes. Under the proposed language, it would appear that a township officer who relies in good faith on reasonable but mistaken legal advice in closing meeting of a specific type would likely be subject to removal by the time a court gets through the process of adjudicating the substance of the dispute.

Regards,

Graham Berg-Moberg  
Staff Attorney