



March 31, 2025

Minnesota Senate
Commerce & Consumer Protection

Re: Electronic Waste (SF1690)

Dear Chair Klein and Members of the Committee,

Eureka Recycling is committed to improving recycling and reducing waste in Minnesota. SF1690 is a key policy in helping us do this.

We are a social enterprise, recycler in the Twin Cities, processing over 100,000 tons of mostly residential recycling each year. We work to demonstrate that recycling can and should be done in ways that benefit our environment, communities, and the regional economy. Unfortunately, electronics placed in the recycling cart are increasingly impacting the health and safety of our workers and increasing the cost of doing business.

Over the years, we have experienced as many as 20 fires in a year, at times 1 – 2 per week, in our Material Recovery Facility (MRF) or inside one of our recycling trucks. These fires are due to batteries and electronics that have been disposed of in residential recycling carts. As we've seen at recycling facilities around the country, these fires can very quickly spread to incredibly flammable plastic and paper streams. These fires and the toxic smoke associated with them are dangerous to our team members' health and the community.

In addition to the danger of fires and exposure to toxic e-waste, there is a significant hard cost of e-waste on the recycling system. These costs include:

- **Insurance Costs:** Across the industry, we have seen a significant increase in the cost of facility insurance by up to 5000% - from less than 20 cents per \$100 of insured property value to as much as \$10 per \$100 of insured value. Battery fires are preventing many recyclers, like us, from even securing insurance.
- **Disposal Costs:** Additionally, we dispose of, on average, 28 tons of e-waste each year costing us \$30,000 annually.
- **Equipment Costs:** While the impact on our equipment is difficult to measure, electronics in our stream increases the general wear and tear as fires weaken equipment due to exposure to heat.

The amount of e-waste is only expected to increase. We need a comprehensive approach to the problem that ensures all Minnesotans can easily and properly dispose of electronics and batteries. Inaction on e-waste will result in continued challenges for Minnesota's recycling industries and continued harm to human and environmental health. It is time the state took action to address the improper disposal of e-waste by passing 1690.

We welcome you and your staff to visit Eureka and tour our MRF where you'll see our team in action. We are happy to provide additional information on this issue and appreciate your consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lucy Mullany', with a stylized, flowing script.

Lucy Mullany
Director of Policy & Advocacy
Eureka Recycling
lucym@eurekarecycling.org