

Chair Carlson and Committee

Elections Committee

Dear Chair Carlson,

My name is Alex Maitheanas, and I am writing to the committee to day to ask each and every member to support SF 529, the bill that would allow Minnesotans to vote on a constitutional amendment that would provide for free and fair elections without military interference.

I have my Master's Degree in Human Rights from the Humphrey School of Public Affairs, and through my education, I heavily studied human rights and civil rights and how they intertwine with one another. In order to protect human rights, we need civil rights like voting and free speech to be protected.

However, we've seen these last few years that voter intimidation and tactics to prevent voting have skyrocketed. We saw in 2024 how ballot boxes on the west coast were set on fire, destroying votes and leaving voters wondering whether or not their voice was counted. We saw Georgia fail to send mail-in ballots, and wait to notify people that the ballots would not be sent until the week before the election. We've seen laws passed in other states that prohibit handing out or receiving food and water, even if a voter has been waiting in line for hours. Two of these examples are clear interference from civil powers and elected officials on the right to vote.

If these things are happening across the country, they could also happen in Minnesota. It is unjust, and needs to be remedied. Minnesotans deserve to vote on this amendment to protect our elections from military and civil powers that want to destroy our democracy.

Once again, I urge committee members to support SF 529.

Thank you,

Alex Maitheanas

Moorhead, MN

