



# Association of Minnesota Counties

125 Charles Avenue, Saint Paul, MN 55103-2108 | [www.mncounties.org](http://www.mncounties.org)

April 2, 2025

**Re: S.F. 2077 (Hawj) Environment and Natural Resources Appropriations**

Dear Chair Hawj and Members of the Senate Environment, Climate, and Legacy Committee:

On behalf of the Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC), a voluntary association representing all 87 counties, we appreciate the opportunity to share our thoughts on SF2077, the governor's budget bill.

AMC understands the difficult budget decisions that impact this budget, and that the committee must weigh in preparing its recommendations. We would like to highlight one item in this bill and a couple of missed opportunities.

The E-waste and Battery Product Stewardship proposal, Article 2, Sections 11-19, is needed to address growing issues of public safety and environmental health tied to these products. This legislation aims to modernize Minnesota's existing e-waste and battery laws under MS Chapter 115A. We have had product stewardship laws in place for these products, but reforms have been sought for many years to address critical shortcomings:

- E-waste costs are not being covered as intended under the current law. Local governments are either subsidizing collection costs or individuals are paying end-of-life fees, which discourage proper disposal.
- Battery recycling laws are outdated and do not adequately address the collection of newer battery chemistries, which pose significant fire risks if improperly managed.

Counties, are mandated to manage solid waste in their jurisdictions, often bearing the financial burden that ultimately falls on property taxpayers. It is reasonable to expect manufacturers and consumers to share that responsibility. This proposal defines the necessary outcomes while allowing flexibility in how the producers meet those obligations.

The primary source of state support for the local government efforts to manage waste is the SCORE grants program. Base funding for this program is included in Article 1, Section 2, lines 12.15 -12.17, from the Environmental Fund at current funding levels. With a difficult General Fund budget, an increased appropriation to the base from the Environmental Fund would be greatly appreciated.

We would also note that this bill includes a reduction of \$1 million for the County Feedlot Program from current funding. This is an important water quality program that has seen increases work requirements and stagnant funding for most of the last decade. Maintaining last the current budget figure of \$2.959 million results in more field time and improved outcomes.

Thank you for considering our perspective on the governor's budget and items to include in your proposal.

Sincerely,



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