

April 3, 2025

Senator Founq Hawj
Chair, Senate Environment, Climate, and Legacy Committee
3231 Minnesota Senate Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Re: S.F. 2077, Environment and Natural Resources Appropriations

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

The Partnership on Waste and Energy (Partnership) is a Joint Powers Board consisting of Hennepin, Ramsey and Washington counties, formed to address waste management and energy issues. The Partnership seeks to end waste, promote renewable energy and enhance the health and resiliency of the communities we serve while advancing equity and responding to the challenges of a changing climate.

The Partnership appreciates the opportunity to express support for several provisions of S.F. 2077 that will have significant impact on protecting public health and the environment and help counties and communities be more successful in reaching challenging statutory waste management goals.

Priority Provisions

- *SCORE grant funding.* Maintaining and building on baseline funding is foundational to support waste reduction, reuse, recycling and composting efforts in the state and assist counties in meeting state mandates. Counties have stepped forward to fund programs required by the state, while the state's contribution has remained relatively steady. We are losing out on opportunities to achieve state goals because of limited resources and escalating program and service costs. The Partnership appreciates the baseline SCORE appropriation in the proposed FY26-27 budget and encourages the committee to consider increasing the appropriation with available Environmental Fund resources to meet ever-growing, unmet waste challenges.
- *Electronic waste and battery product stewardship.* The increasing stream of electronic waste and batteries must be kept out of mixed municipal solid waste and disposal facilities to reduce waste toxicity, prevent risks to the environment and public health and recover valuable products and essential materials for reuse and recycling. Waste facilities are increasingly experiencing fires from mismanaged lithium-ion batteries and are struggling to cope with the associated liability issues. The Partnership supports legislative action that updates the state's outdated electronic waste recycling law and various battery laws to reduce costs and increase recycling convenience for consumers, relieve burdens and risks on counties and taxpayers and put responsibility for managing these products on the industries designing and producing these products.

Other Provisions We Support

- *Food waste reduction, food rescue, and organics recovery.* Ambitious state recycling mandates will not be met without addressing the biggest component of our trash stream—food waste and other organic materials. Grants and other assistance to businesses, non-profits, and local government are one important tool in this effort.
- *Waste prevention, reduction and recycling grants.* The Partnership supports funding for other waste prevention, reduction and recycling grants to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and make important contributions in achieving state waste management goals.
- *Recycling Market Development Grants.* Growing Minnesota markets for recyclables collected in the state helps counties meet state recycling mandates, stabilizes recycling program costs and supports Minnesota businesses and green jobs for Minnesotans.
- *Maintaining Local Recycling Development Grant (LRDG) funding to counties.* The funds allocated through the Metropolitan Landfill Abatement Fund are an important complement to SCORE funding to support recycling efforts.
- *Implementing toxicity reduction requirements.* The state took a leadership role in adopting laws addressing toxic materials such as PFAS and certain chemicals in children's products that pose risks to public health and waste facilities. Funding to assure these laws can be implemented and enforced are critical to their success.

Thank you for the opportunity to present the Partnership's positions on S.F. 2077. We stand ready to work together on these and other important issues for the benefit of our communities and the state as the Environment and Natural Resources appropriations bill moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,



Commissioner Fran Miron, Washington County
Chair, Partnership on Waste and Energy