



Senator Fong Hawj
95 University Ave. W
3231 Minnesota Senate Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Senator Steve Green
95 University Avenue W.
2319 Minnesota Senate Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Hawj, Ranking Member Green and members of the committee:

On behalf of the Minnesota Inter-County Association's (MICA) 17 member counties, we are writing in support of the inclusion of SF1690, which would establish an electronic waste (e-waste), battery and circuit board product stewardship program, in Article 6 of SF2077. Manufacturers and producers are uniquely positioned to help mitigate the end-of-life disposal of hazardous products like e-waste and batteries currently in our waste stream. Building on extended producer responsibility (EPR) legislation passed last year focused on packaging and paper products, SF1690 represents a reasonable next step to ensure all stakeholders are involved in mitigating the environmental consequences of our growing waste problem.

Counties consistently spend significantly more on managing solid waste than we receive from existing state funding sources like the solid waste management tax (SWMT). Minnesota's current e-waste law is outdated, with counties shouldering most of the financial and operational burdens for keeping these products out of landfills and disposal facilities. Counties have tried to keep up with a rapidly evolving battery and electronics market by implementing their own ordinances and safety protocols, but this inconsistent approach only creates confusion for consumers and increases costs for local governments.

With MICA counties managing over 44% of the waste generated in the state¹, we are especially aware of the risks posed by electronics that end up in landfills or other waste management facilities. These metals can leak and contaminate the soil and groundwater, with lithium-ion batteries having sparked fires at sorting stations and landfills across the state. All Minnesotans should live in an environment with clean air, clean water, and unpolluted land, regardless of their geographic location or household income. Thank you for including SF1690 in the Senate Environment omnibus to ensure Minnesota is leading the way in removing some of the most toxic products from the waste stream.

Sincerely,

Nathan Jesson
Executive Director
Minnesota Inter-County Association

Rachel Sosnowchik
Environmental Liaison
Minnesota Inter-County Association

¹ Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, 2022 SCORE Report