

March 10, 2025



Chair Xiong and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on SF 1690 (Kupec). Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy (MCEA) is a non-profit organization celebrating our 50<sup>th</sup> year of using law and science to protect the state's natural resources and the health of its people.

MCEA strongly supports SF 1690, which tackles electronic waste collection and processing in Minnesota. Minnesotans are sitting on a stockpile of valuable minerals that could be used to address the climate crisis, but it may not be one you think of. It's the pile of defunct and obsolete devices and cords in our junk drawers. One study found that the average American household has about 80 e-waste devices lying around. When it comes to meeting materials needs, there is no better source than the already-mined and already-processed minerals that are in electronic waste. Recycling is always cleaner, cheaper, and faster than new mining operations, meaning that if Minnesota wants to lead on the materials needed for the clean energy transition we should start here. MCEA's ["Mining the Climate Crisis"](#) series dug deep into this and is a good source of information about the potential that SF 1690 can unlock.

Currently, far too much of this valuable material is landfilled or incinerated. Using one metal as an example, the U.S. recycles just 33% of our copper, compared with a 60% recycling rate in Europe. In Minnesota, we captured just 23.7% of mixed electronics for recycling in 2020. A pilot study estimated that the value of capturing 100% of these devices in Minnesota would be \$2.8 billion per year.

SF 1690 was developed in collaboration with stakeholders including county solid waste administrators, e-waste collectors, and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. It puts the responsibility for the cost of collecting and recycling e-waste devices on the manufacturers, rather than the counties or consumers. The current e-waste recycling law is out of date and failing to capture an increasing amount of electronic waste. The cost falls to property tax payers, who pay for the cost of local units of government to collect e-waste, and consumers who pay fees at the end of life for their e-waste. No wonder so much of this valuable material ends up in the back of closets and the dreaded "drawer of shame" instead of being collected and recycled.

Thank you to Sen. Kupec for authoring this important bill.

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