

April 1, 2025

Chair Tou Xiong
Senate State and Local Government Committee
3203 Minnesota Senate Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Xiong and Committee members:

On behalf of the farmers, workers, small businesses and other concerned citizens our organizations represent, we write to share our support for SF3044 which contains the FY26-27 budget proposal for the Attorney General's Office (AGO). The funding in this legislation will help protect fair, open and competitive markets in Minnesota and build a strong economy.

The increased concentration of economic power touches nearly every aspect of our economy. Between 1997 and 2012 approximately 75% of industries became more consolidated, while the US economy grew 50% more concentrated since 2005.ⁱ At the current rate of consolidation, it is estimated that the US will have just one company per industry by 2070.ⁱⁱ The growing power of corporate monopolies harms Minnesotans, as giant firms use their power to raise prices, lower wages, offshore jobs, hurt smaller businesses, and influence public policy and politics.

In 2023 the legislature provided a significant investment in the AGO that provided for additional resources to enforce antitrust, consumer protection and wage theft laws. That additional investment has allowed for creation of an Antitrust Division at the AGO and resulted in important litigation against companies engaged in wage theft, worker misclassification, price-fixing, monopolization, and deceptive lending and marketing practices.

SF3044 would build on this work in two critical ways. First, the legislation would allow the AGO to hire an additional attorney in the Antitrust Division. The Antitrust Division has brought important enforcement actions against pesticide manufacturers, pharmaceutical giants, tech companies, opioid manufacturers, health insurance companies, property management companies and farm equipment manufacturers.ⁱⁱⁱ This would grow the Antitrust Division to seven attorneys, in line with states of similar size such as Connecticut (7 FTE), Colorado (6 FTE), and Washington (10 FTE).^{iv}

SF3044 would also enable the Consumer Litigation Account - established by the legislature in 2023 – to become a revolving fund using a small percentage of recoveries from those cases. That account supports multistate litigation across the AGO's Consumer Protection Section which includes the Consumer Protection, Antitrust, Civil Rights and Wage Theft Divisions. Turning this fund into a revolving fund will enhance the AGO's ability to join other states in addressing anticompetitive conduct that harms Minnesotans.

The appropriation for the AGO in SF3044 is an important part of addressing our highly concentrated economy and we urge committee members to support this bill. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Minnesota Farmers Union
American Economic Liberties Project
Institute for Local Self-Reliance
North Star Prosperity
SEIU Healthcare MN & IA
Small Business Majority
Land Stewardship Project
CURE
Open Markets Institute
Minnesota Nurses Association
MNIndys
AFSCME 65

ⁱ bit.ly/bostonfedconcentration

ⁱⁱ <https://economicsecurityproject.org/work/antimonopoly/>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.lrl.mn.gov/docs/2024/mandated/241354.pdf>

^{iv} <https://som.yale.edu/centers/thurman-arnold-project-at-yale/modern-antitrust-enforcement>