

February 12, 2025

Senator D. Scott Dibble, Chair, Senate Transportation Committee
3107 Minnesota Senate Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Re: Opposition for SF 485 - Statewide Moratorium on Billboard Construction

Dear Chair Dibble:

On behalf of the 1,700+ members and affiliates of the St. Paul Area Chamber, I am writing in opposition to SF 485, which proposes a statewide ban on new billboards in Minnesota, designates existing billboards as nonconforming uses, and allows for their phased removal over time. This bill will negatively impact local businesses, the tourism industry, and municipalities across Minnesota.

Minnesota already has federal, state, and local regulations governing billboards. These existing controls ensure that billboards are regulated in a way that meets the standards of a community while minimizing negative impacts. New billboards are restricted to commercial and industrial zones and prevent disruption to residential and environmentally sensitive areas. Additional restrictions would only impose an undue burden on businesses.

The regulation of billboards is best handled at the local level. Cities and counties possess the knowledge to address the unique needs of their communities. A statewide ban erodes local authority and strips municipalities of the power to make decisions that reflect the interests and values of their residents.

Billboards are vital to driving tourism and supporting Minnesota's economy. They are a key tool for businesses to promote the state's attractions, festivals, and events. This increased promotion raises awareness and attracts more visitors, generating revenue for local businesses and communities that rely on tourism.

Small businesses depend on billboards for advertising. They provide an affordable and effective marketing tool, particularly in areas where other options are costly or less impactful. For many small businesses, billboards are an essential way to promote products and services. Eliminating this advertising option would disproportionately affect small businesses, which rely on billboards to compete with larger companies in a cost-effective way.



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We urge you to oppose SF 485. Local control and existing regulations already provide an effective framework for balancing the needs of communities, businesses, and the environment. Imposing further restrictions would undermine this balance and disproportionately affect small businesses that depend on billboards for growth and visibility.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. Please reach out if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



John H. Perlich
Vice President of Government Affairs
St. Paul Area Chamber

