



MINNESOTA
RESOURCE
RECOVERY
ASSOCIATION

ZERO WASTED
MAKING EVERY RESOURCE COUNT

Dear Co-Chair Heintzeman and Co-Chair Fischer and members of the House Environment and Natural Resources Finance and Policy Committee:

The Minnesota Resource Recovery Association (MRRA) is pleased to offer our support for HF 4017 (Johnson), a bill that increases the penalties and oversight for the improper disposal of infectious waste. The Infectious Waste Control Act in current law requires hospitals, surgical centers, and other infectious waste generators to separate the infectious waste from their general garbage and send it to a facility that is licensed to manage that type of waste.

Unfortunately, we know from experience that this does not always happen, and infectious waste gets co-mingled with general municipal solid waste (MSW). When that occurs, our employees are put at risk of exposure to blood borne pathogens, including HIV, hepatitis B and C, and others.

Many of the nine statewide MRRA facilities that process MSW have reported incidences of infectious waste being received at their respective facilities from commercial generators. As more front-end processing and recycling of MSW occurs to reduce the waste going to energy recovery or a landfill, our employees are exposed to a higher risk of contact with these materials. MRRA supports this legislation to help ensure the safety of our employees as we work to increase landfill diversion.

Current methods to enforce existing law have not worked and we support the efforts in HF 4017 / SF 4187 to increase the penalties and oversight of infectious waste generators to achieve 100% compliance with the Infectious Waste Control Act. The safety and well-being of our solid waste employees is of the highest importance to us. By ensuring that infectious waste is managed appropriately and kept out of our facilities we can support our employees in doing the important and necessary work of managing our municipal solid waste. Thank you for considering this legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve Vrchota", with a large checkmark at the end.

Steve Vrchota, Chair, Minnesota Resource Recovery Association