



100% Campaign
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Chair Acomb and Members of the Committee,

We are writing to express our support for House File 2502 (Hanson), House File 2747 (Rehm), House File 1853 (Acomb), and House File 2170 (Berg).

Our transition to a cleaner, more equitable economy means real opportunities to improve the lives of Minnesotans. To get there, we'll need to change how we plan, how we build, and how we stay connected. These four bills will help Minnesotans make this transition together, improving our schools and school transportation services, assisting local communities that are preparing for climate change impacts, and ensuring Minnesota can access cleaner materials for this future we're building together.

First, we strongly support House File 2502, Representative Hanson's program to accelerate the deployment of electric school buses. Modeled on the successful Solar for Schools program, House File 2502, as amended, would help more districts transition their bus fleets to electric. The bill would provide districts with 75% - 95% of the costs of replacing or repowering their existing fossil fuel powered buses. It would prioritize deployment to the districts and areas that need it most. It would support the Department of Commerce's provision of technical assistance to the districts, transportation service providers, or utilities that decide to apply. If enacted, this bill will meet multiple bottom lines, lowering costs for schools, cleaning up ambient air pollution, and improving health outcomes for students.

Second, we support Rep. Rehm's House File 2747, a bill to continue funding Minnesota's Solar for Schools program. This is a proven and popular program that is lowering costs for schools and creating educational opportunities for students. During the program's first round of applications in 2022, requests to participate well exceeded the program's available funding. Of the 122 applications received, the Department of Commerce was only able to serve up to 80 schools in 45 districts. The additional funds proposed in HF 2747 will help meet the existing demand.

Third, we support Rep. Acomb's House File 1853, a bill that invests in the University of Minnesota Extension Service's efforts to educate farmers, land and resource managers, and local communities that are preparing for extreme weather.

This work is timely, relevant, and in-demand. Agricultural leaders, land and resource managers, and local elected leaders are continually planning for our future. These preparations help communities manage our land, water, wildlife, and agriculture systems. They support the creation of more resilient and sustainable buildings. They help us mitigate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from natural disasters. To do this planning effectively, community leaders need reliable assistance from trusted sources.

The U of M Extension can provide this. It's a well-regarded system that's already in relationship with key stakeholders across the state. With additional staffing, the Extension will be better prepared to serve communities with the rigorous, science-based expertise that the University of Minnesota is fully qualified to provide.

Finally, we support Senate File 2170, Rep. Berg's bill to establish the 'Buy Clean and Buy Fair Minnesota Act'. The bill would require that materials used in the construction (or major renovation) of state buildings over 50,000 square feet or trunk highways include a Type III Environmental Product Declaration, as certified by the International Organization for Standard's 14025 Standard. Meeting this standard would help ensure that the steel, concrete, and asphalt paving materials that Minnesota uses have lower lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions. The bill provides a pilot program, a waiver process, grants to businesses to support compliance, and a requirement to report back to the legislature in 2025. All of these will help ensure the program meets its goals.

Minnesota is already moving toward a cleaner, more equitable future. These bills will help us make this transition together.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

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