

Hello Committee Administrator Rudolph,

In these unprecedented times we need to ensure we are doing all we can to ensure Minnesota continues to have high voter turnout, while protecting our citizens. Just as the members of the legislature were provided protections against the threat of COVID-19, we deserve the same. The proposed policies in this bill provide that protection, while moving responsible guardrails to ensure the vote by mail process is not abused.

There are a little over 100,000 Minnesotans in 1,000 precincts in Greater MN who have been voting by mail. When that was moved, whatever concerns over voter fraud, forged signatures etc. were quelled and it successfully became law. They are able to vote by mail. What stands in the way of making this available to all Minnesota, not just those living in towns with 400 or fewer population, under these extenuating circumstances.

As members of this committee and the Secretary of State consider the implementation of the vote by mail process proposed, I strongly recommend that local jurisdictions be provided with guidance ensuring that polling places identified for closure and/or consolidation of polling places aren't done in a way that may negatively impact Minnesotans who've historically been disenfranchised; like members of the communities of color, our immigrant communities and Minnesotans facing poverty.

With the implications of changing the process with less than 3 months to go, I would recommend members of this body and the Secretary of State's Office consider changing the deadline for receiving the vote by mail to the "postmarked" date instead of the election day.

Best,  
Mark Kirschner