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Chair Klevorn, House State and Local Government Finance and Policy  
Members, House State and Local Government Finance and Policy

Regarding HF1693 Section 12 changes required to reflect 2017 Ch. 4 Sec. 54 Duty transfer from  
nonprofit Historical Society to State Administration

March 1, 2023

Dear Chair Klevorn and State and Local Government Finance and Policy Members,

Additional housekeeping language needs to be addressed in HF1693, a bill described by the LCC  
on February 20, 2023 as a “housekeeping bill.”

LCC notes that Section 12 of HF1693 addresses member changes to the Mississippi River  
Parkway Commission. Changes made by the legislature in 2017 (Ch. 4 Sec 54) to duties related  
to national historic interests were moved nonprofit Minnesota Historical Society to nonpartisan  
Department of Administration. HF1693 is the proper vehicle to address those duty changes.  
This can be done by striking “director of the Minnesota Historical Society” and  
inserting/replacing with “commissioner of Department of Administration.”

Prior to March 1, 2018, the State’s National Register needs were met by employees of the  
nonprofit Minnesota Historical Society. In 2017 legislation (Ch. 4 Sec. 54), the State Historic  
Preservation Office was removed from the nonprofit and inserted into State Department of  
Administration. The nonprofit is no longer the authority nor employs State experts accountable  
and responsible for federal reports and communications under US Code specifically related to all  
structures and places listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Nonprofit MN Historical  
Society was relieved of those federal requirements and duties.

This change is not reflected in Minnesota Statutes 2022, 161.1419 addressing the Mississippi  
River Parkway Commission. Incidentally, the Commission’s focus is bridging State efforts with  
National efforts for promotion of the Mississippi River through all states beginning with  
Minnesota and ending at the Gulf. Minnesota’s Department of Administration is the correct  
agency for appointment on this commission as the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) is  
responsible for compliance under U.S. Code and Regulations.

Should SHPO opt to appoint an MNHS employee to the commission, that would require a report.  
This report would eliminate the nonprofit clause in Minnesota’s Data Privacy Chapter 13D  
excluding MNHS from all inquiries, audits, requests for documentation that currently can be

given in the event anyone or State office requests documents from MNHS on the grounds of nonprofit status.

Earlier I contacted the authors of HF1693 and Sen. Murphy, author of the companion bill in the Senate (SF1746) by electronic mail. The body of that letter appears below my signature and includes deeper examination of the nonprofit's cooperation with state offices, federal authorities, and the general public under US Code compliance and State statute compared to SHPO duties of the nonpartisan Minnesota Department of Administration statutorily responsible for enforcement of all US Code and Minnesota directives developed for protection and preservation of Minnesota historic places. Recent examples within the MRPC's main focus, the Great River Road National Scenic Byway, illustrate the need for commission appointments be directed by the Commissioner of the Department of Administration.

This additional change is a true housekeeping feature that can be addressed in Section 12 without review; it deserves bipartisan support.

Please amend HF1693 to reflect needed language updates created by 2017 Ch. 4 Sec. 54 regarding removal of federal accountability, responsibility and related duties from nonprofit MN Historical Society to State Dept of Administration effective March 1, 2018. Striking "director of Minnesota Historical Society" and inserting "commissioner of department of administration" updates and reflects the purpose and intent of the 2017 change in statute 161.1419.

Thank you,



Stephanie Chappell

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Portion of letter sent to bill authors on February 23, 2023:

Dear Chairs Klevorn and Murphy, Minority Lead Nash and Representative Bahner,

...2017 Chapter 4 Section 54 transferred the powers and employees of the State Historic Preservation Office to the Department of Administration from 501 (c) (3) nonprofit Minnesota Historical Society. The transfer completed on March 1, 2018. The nonprofit Minnesota Historical Society is legally powerless over any aspects of historic properties, places, and registers in the federal and state arenas.

...After discovering 120+ year old limestone footings at Fort Snelling, MNHS failed to notify the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)...The Riverview Corridor transit project is scheduled to stop at Historic Fort Snelling within feet of the same area where the century old architectural artifacts were discovered. Riverview Corridor - a bus rapid transit line - staff have presented before the Commission. The Commission shares several interests in preservation of the historic views and places along the Mississippi.

The Riverview Corridor is in a phase where historic and cultural reviews are being investigated under a federal Section 106 Process requirement. SHPO is the only authority in Minnesota authorized to act on behalf of historic properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Nonprofit MNHS has no authority to judge, direct or otherwise decide Minnesota's building and land asset futures or Historic Register properties. Properties on this list that are within the scope of the Riverview Corridor transit project include Coldwater Spring, Fort Snelling, and the Sibley Historic Site. These sites date to the infancy of the Territory and State and include the oldest manmade structures in Minnesota including the Round Tower at Fort Snelling and the 1836 Sibley House.