



Representative Mike Freiberg
381 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55115

May 5, 2024

Senator Jim Carlson
95 University Avenue West
St. Paul, MN 55115

RE: HF 4772/SF 4729 Omnibus Elections Policy Bill Conference Committee

Dear Chair Freiberg and Chair Carlson,

On behalf of the Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA), it is my pleasure to express our support for both the House (HF 4772) and Senate (SF 4729) Elections Policy Omnibus bills.

HF 4772: Article 1, Section 1, Lines 2.14-2.23

SF 4729: Article 1, Section 18, Lines 16.3-17.2

MSBA strongly supports the changes that modify the requirements of a school board when filling a vacancy. The modifications to statute will help public school districts by delaying costly and labor-intensive special elections after a school board member resigns. When outside of the general election cycle, school districts are required to run these elections themselves without any dedicated funding. This results in school board special elections that must be paid for with money from the general fund, taking money out of the classroom. Additionally, school board special elections typically have low voter turnout.

MSBA also supports this bill's change in requirements when a school board member resigns less than 90 days prior to the end of their term. This revision states that the board may, but is not required to, fill the vacancy by board appointment. Given the 30-day waiting period that is required after the resolution to appoint is approved, a board may do all the work of appointing to have a newly appointed board member serve at only one meeting before the end of a term. We value the local control and flexibility offered by this change.

HF 4772: Article 1, Section 46, Lines 37.2-37.17

SF 4729: Article 1, Section 53, Lines 42.1-42.17

MSBA thanks you for this provision that allows Minnesota school boards to pass a combined polling place resolution only when a change is made. This modification will benefit all 331 Minnesota public school districts that are required by current statute to pass the same consolidated polling place resolution every year, even when no changes have been made.

This revision will create a common standard and bring all polling place regulations into the same configuration. We appreciate your work to support our school boards in efficient and effective school board governance.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to improving school board elections.

Sincerely,
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