

March 19, 2025

Re: HF 701, Anaerobic Digester Letter of Support

Dear Chair Swedzinski and Committee Members,

The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners is proud to offer our support for HF 701 (Johnson, W), a bill that moves us towards our vision of creating vibrant, healthy communities without waste.

The Recycling and Energy Board (R&E Board), a Joint Powers Board of Washington and Ramsey Counties, recently expanded our innovative Food Scraps Pickup Program to ensure that all households in the two counties have the option to recycle their food scraps easily from home. As you are aware, organics (such as discarded food scraps) make up over 20% of collected trash. It is imperative that we address this issue to make progress towards achieving Minnesota's 75% recycling goal and to reduce the greenhouse gases created by landfills. A key limiting factor has been the lack of sufficient infrastructure to process organics into beneficial products. Composting is the traditional method, but anaerobic digestion has the added benefit of producing biogas, which can be used to produce renewable natural gas.

The R&E Board has entered into a 20-year contract agreement to provide organics to DemCon facility for processing by anaerobic digestion and we are committed to pursuing this next level in waste management for Minnesota. Investment in this facility will produce 75,000 tons per year of new organics processing capacity in Minnesota. The facility will produce 170,000 MMBtu of renewable natural gas and 10,000 tons of biochar each year. This will result in a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 31,914 MTCO_{2e} annually compared to if food waste went to a landfill.

It is time for Minnesota to adopt new technologies to manage our organic waste, create renewable natural gas, and move us forward in achieving our recycling goals. For that reason, we strongly support investment in this new and exciting technology and urge committee members to support it as well.

Thank you,



Commissioner Rafael Ortega
Ramsey County Board Chair