

February 6, 2023

Common Cause MN is a nonpartisan grassroots organization dedicated to upholding the core values of American democracy. We work to create open, honest, and accountable government that serves the public interest; promote equal rights, opportunity, and representation for all. HF3/SF3 is reflective of several of those prodemocracy core values and has room to fully reflect those values by reincorporating dropped provisions previously included in its earlier version, HF9.

Minnesota is home to over 18,000 multipartisan members across the state and despite belonging to various MN party affiliations, or not being affiliated, the one thing they've come together to do is support our work ensuring our Republic's democracy is safeguarded, our elections continue to reflect the will of Minnesotans and everyone's vote counts.

To be truly of, by, and for the people, government must reflect everyone it serves. Voting rights, unabridged access to the ballot and safeguards around the integrity of our elections are critical to ensuring all Minnesotans have a say in shaping the future of our families and communities. We believe democracy is how a free society resolves its differences. And in order to do that well, we must all agree the process is fair, produces equitable outcomes, and reflects our communities, our values, and our priorities. Nobody wins all the time, but if the process is fair, at least we can trust it. HF3/SF3 moves us closer in that direction.

Specifically, we support the following provisions:

Article I's sections on:

- Restoring the vote
- Automatic voter registration
- Pre-registration of 16, 17-year-olds

Article II's sections on:

- Voting instructions and sample ballots in languages other than English
- Intimidation and interference in the voting process

Article III's sections on:

- Limiting the foreign-influenced corporations.

We urge Sen. Greenman and members of this committee to consider the added impact on the Office of the Secretary of State in its oversight role and as the office responsible for education and outreach designated within SF3/HF3. We respectfully ask that an appropriation be made allowing for responsible oversight and fulfillment of duties deferred to its office to minimize the risk of unintended consequences.

Additionally, we ask the following dropped provision from the prior version of HF 3 (HF9, 2021-22) be reincorporated, particularly those provisions impacting Minnesotans of Color and other disenfranchised communities. Specifically:

- **Article I, Sec. 1, subd 2.,** All postsecondary institutions that enroll students accepting state financial aid must prepare a current list of students enrolled in the institution and residing in the institution's housing or within ten miles of the institution's campus. The list shall include

each student's current address, unless the student is enrolled in the Safe at Home address confidentiality program as provided in chapter 5B.

- **Article I, Sec. 1, subd. 3, (f)**, “... An eligible voter who resides on a reservation but does not have a residential address recognized by the United States Postal Service may register to vote using, as the voter's residential address, the address of the tribal council headquarters or any other address approved by the secretary of the tribal council.”.
- **Article I, Sec. 1, subd. 3a**, Additional proofs of residence permitted with photo identification, and 3b, Additional proofs of residence permitted for students.
- **Article II, Sec. 15**, establishing absentee ballot boxes for every 20,000 registered voters.
- **Article II, Sec. 33**, Physical assistance in marking ballots. Removing provision that limits the ability to assist in marking the ballot to 3 times.
- **Article V**, Increasing Transparency and Disclosure of Secret Spending, lines 60.22 - 60.27 on clarifying “expressly advocating” language.
- **Article V, subd. 2**, Independent Expenditures, (c) lines 61.15 - 61. 21.
- **Article V, subd. 3, (c)** deleting lines 62.1 - 62.2
- **Article V, Sec. 4, subd. 3a**, Certain Electronic communications and advertisements.

Finally, as we understand the current provisions of HF3/SF3 **Article II, Sec. 1, subd. 3**, it leaves pockets of emerging large BIPOC immigrant populations in greater MN out if they don't fall under the bill's 3% threshold before key information is provided in another language.

This 3% provision places the responsibility of alerting the secretary of the state or county auditor of language needs on impacted individuals, local groups/orgs that may already experience language barriers; particularly in greater MN.

Additionally, an unintended impact may be favoring metro area demographics while not equitably including emerging pockets of isolated English as a second language communities needing access to language-specific information. We ask that this provision be revisited and amended to place the responsibility of assessing impacted communities on local elections officials. They are in the best position to identify key community partners to work with on identifying merging population language needs. Many election officials already do this, and it does not add any significant burden on what's already being done for local outreach. Type text here

Thank you for your dedication to all Minnesotans as you work in committee.

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