

## Written Testimony in Support of HF1800

03/04//25

Dear Chair Quam and Members of the Election Committee,

My name is Karin Miller. I have been an election judge in multiple counties and am involved with a loosely affiliated election integrity group in Dakota County. Together, I and other concerned citizens have engaged with our cities and counties in the election process. We have observed and learned much.

In the 2024 elections, there were many irregularities, lack of proper party balance and proper handling of ballots, along with evidence of numbers changing, ballots lost, voters voting twice. There is clear and compelling evidence that the process, transparency and accountability in our elections must be addressed and improved.

HF 1800 is a good start toward much needed change. There are many provisions in this bill which will increase the security and transparency of our elections, plus improve and further standardize our elections across Minnesota's 87 counties.

Below is a summary of key positive changes in this bill that I would like to emphasize.

First of all, there perhaps is no greater addition in this bill than the requirement in Sec. 10, Subd. 5 that "no more than half of the election judges in a precinct, **or at any location where ballots are being counted, recounted, or reviewed**, may be members of the same major party..."

Adding this simple line into law, which guarantees that there is PARTY BALANCE EVERY time a ballot is being handed, will accomplish much to rectify the many procedural failures in our 2024 elections and prevent them in future elections.

Along these lines of bipartisan oversight, I also appreciate other protections added in this bill to facilitate communication between counties, the Secretary of State, and the Major Parties to ensure that every need for partisan election judge quotas are filled.

Another excellent improvement is Section 6, Sub.6 in which a new **Chain of Custody Procedure** is required of every municipality and county, along with the creation and **maintenance of a log that identifies each person who handles a ballot, ballot tabulator, or other voting equipment**. The creation of this process and log creates the documentation necessary to fully audit the process of our elections, and examine exactly what went awry if any irregularities are found, such as in Scott County in the Tabke / Paul race.

There are also several good changes to support control at the local level in our elections, such as allowing municipalities to add precincts to the county PER and/or chose whether or not they want to use the electronic registers. I encourage you to support initiatives such as these which increase of local control in our elections.

Finally, another excellent addition in this bill is in Section 24, Subd. 3 in which Cast Vote Records **MUST be available to individuals requesting it...**” It is critical that you add this line to guarantee the legal right of the people to review cast vote records. This public transparency will ensure accountability in our election process. After all, without the cast vote records, no one truly knows or can truly audit what has transpired inside these tabulating machines.

After the 2020 election in Dakota County, in which approximately 154,000 ballots were not yet matched to an eligible voter at the time of the certification, numerous citizens requested copies of the cast vote records. Dakota County denied all of these requests, except in one instance in which they provided highly redacted, useless data.

Divulging these cast vote records should not be a problem for any county who has followed all legal procedures and has nothing to hide. This line must be added into Minnesota law to guarantee the people’s right to see the cast vote records and review their own elections.

Members, please support these positive changes in HF1800 that will further guarantee public transparency and bipartisan protections over our election process.