



COMMON CAUSE MINNESOTA

546 Rice Street

Saint Paul, MN 55103

612.605.7978

www.commoncause.org/mn

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Common Cause MN is a nonpartisan grassroots citizen's lobby home to over 18,000 statewide bipartisan members, 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, and everyone's vote counts.

Young people across the state have demonstrated their commitment to our democratic process by showing up to the polls and leading the nation in voter turnout. According to Tuft's University, "Minnesota consistently has some of the highest youth participation in the country: it has had one of the top three youth voter turnouts in the last three national elections." In 2024, 41 million Gen Zers will be eligible to vote, and adding temporary polling places on college campuses demonstrates Minnesota's commitment to uplifting the voices of young people in our civic process.

Minnesota students face unique challenges when casting their ballots. Between hectic, fluctuating school and work schedules, long trips to and from their campuses, and limited transportation options, just to name a few, they often face barriers in simply reaching distant polling places. Opening on-campus polling places has been proven to advance voter accessibility for student voters. Leveraging the requirement of on campus polling places helps to chip away at the disparities in voter turnout among students of color and their white counterparts.

It is critical that action is taken towards increasing voter accessibility for students by including on-campus polling locations using the language outlined in HF 3447. Prioritizing initiatives that expand voter access and addressing the barriers that many young people face when it comes time to vote is necessary for creating a thriving, functioning, and healthy democracy.

Given statewide underrepresentation of BIPOC students in enrollments at postsecondary campuses across Minnesota, we must continue striving for greater parity in how youth of color and other disenfranchised youth experience democracy as compared to their white counterparts.

We believe that when co-creating an inclusive democracy, the "how" proposed policies come together are as important as "what" that comes from the "how". Democracy is how a free society resolves its differences. And to do that well, we must all agree that the process of including direct input in the solutions proposed by impacted Minnesotans is fair, produces equitable outcomes, and reflects our communities, our values, and our priorities.

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

Emma Rage,
Policy & Civic Engagement Manager

democracy is **OUR** common cause