

April 8, 2020

INTRODUCTION

Common Cause Minnesota is a statewide nonpartisan good government organization with approximately 18,000 multipartisan statewide members and allies. We don't care who Minnesotans vote for, but we do care that they are empowered through that process of accessing and casting their vote and that partisan interests don't interfere with either.

COVID-19 CONTINGENCY PLAN CONSIDERATIONS

Minnesota Local Government Needs

In the last several days, there has been a surge in interest to adopt COVID-19 local government contingency plans to safely administer to the day-to-day needs of Minnesotans engaging their local government within its due course of business. It is important to recognize that any necessary adjustments to how our local governments function meeting the needs of its constituency must be realistic and made within the context of Minnesota's existing infrastructure so as not to create undue burden on already strained offices/operations.

Common Cause MN Supports sc7479-4, Rep. Freiberg, Providing for Electronic Signatures

Based on the information provided to date, we agree it is prudent to support our local government offices by authorizing counties, cities, and townships to accept documents or signatures electronically, by mail, or facsimile as described within Section 1 of Rep. Freiberg's sc7479-4.

Common Cause MN Supports HF4507, Rep. Koegel, Medical Exception to Open Meeting Law

Currently under Minn. Stat. § 13D.021 the meeting flexibility applies only during a health pandemic or declared emergency. We support HF4507 because ultimately once the Peacetime State of Emergency is lifted, what is proposed in HF4507 also allows any elected officials who are sick or have self-quarantine to continue to work while keeping themselves and others safe and healthy.

Should we received information changing our current position on either HF4507 or sc7479-4, I will directly communicate with members of the House State Government Operations Committee and advise the members on our position change as well as the facts underlying that change.

We ask members to continue working with the Secretary of State's Office and our local government entities during this unprecedented time making sure our local government and elections systems are reinforced and responsibly funded countering current and lasting effect of COVID-19 pandemic.

Thank you for your commitment keeping Minnesotans first, ahead of self, partisan and special interest. I am available to answer any questions on this statement or other democracy related matters our office is working on.

Annastacia Belladonna-Carrera, Executive Director

Common Cause MN
50 years of Holding Power Accountable