



February 2, 2023

Chair Ginny Klevorn
State and Local Government and Finance Committee
581 State Office Building
100 Rev Dr Martin Luther King Jr Blvd
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Klevorn and committee members,

On behalf of the Main Street Alliance (MSA), a national network of small businesses who organize around local economic issues with members across Minnesota, I would like to share our strong support for the FY24-25 proposed budget for the Attorney General's Office, which will enable the office to better protect our state from corporate monopolies.

Corporate concentration is rampant across the economy with a study by the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston finding the entire economy is 50% more concentrated than it was in 2005. Growing corporate concentration hurts the ability of small businesses to compete and grow, drives economic and racial inequality, and undermines democracy. To build an economy where power is dispersed and small businesses can thrive, we must reign in the destructive power of corporate monopolies.

The proposed budget for the Attorney General's Office contains two key proposals that will help protect small businesses and families from powerful corporate monopolies. The first is increasing funding for the antitrust division. Currently the Attorney General's antitrust division has just 2.5 FTEs and the proposed budget would enable the office to hire two additional attorneys, a key first step in providing the resources necessary to adequately enforce federal and state antitrust laws.

The second proposal would create a revolving litigation expense fund for multistate litigation, which could include complex multistate antitrust cases. Many of the corporate giants that are squeezing small businesses and remaking our main streets, operate across various state lines. This makes partnership with other states a key tool for addressing anticompetitive conduct. The one-time appropriation in the budget proposal will help seed this expense account, which will be self-sustaining in the future.

Monopoly power is a top concern for the small business owners that make up the Main Street Alliance, which is why in 2021 MSA surveyed over 100 of our top leaders and further held listening sessions and interviews with over 50 small business leaders across the country to hear their feedback on growing monopoly power.

This proposed budget is a key step in leveling the playing field for small businesses and MSA looks forward to working with this committee and Attorney General Keith Ellison to secure this important funding.

Sincerely,

Chanda Causer

Chanda Causer,
Executive Director
Main Street Alliance