



February 28, 2023

Dear Chair Frieberg and Members of the House Elections Committee:

Minnesota's local governments play a leading role in the administration of local, state, and federal elections throughout the State of Minnesota. As everyone can agree, election systems are the heartbeat of our democracy and represent the pillars of public faith in our institutions as a whole. **As such, the Minnesota Association of County Officers, League of Minnesota Cities, and Association of Minnesota counties support all mechanisms that would further invest in our elections systems by providing opportunities to further strengthen security measures and training while also and providing protections to the vast number of election judges, poll workers, volunteers, and administrators across our state who make our system function.**

As committee members are aware, local election officials play a critical role in administering the state and nation's election systems. Our organizations appreciate the provisions of HF 635 that provide a series of protections for elections officials performing official duties related to elections. As local election officials, it is important to us that any protections extend to election staff and election judges, which this bill does. Our members have reported concerns from election judges regarding their safety and increased questions regarding what they should do if their service as a judge is hindered by other individuals. Election officials view HF 635 as an opportunity to provide our valued election volunteers, judges, and staff confidence in their security and protection from harassment. In turn, we believe that these protections will assist in the recruitment and retention of election workers, which are critical to the successful operation of our state's election systems.

We thank committee members for their work on behalf of our state and look forward to continued collaboration.

Sincerely,

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