



COMMON CAUSE MINNESOTA

546 Rice Street

Saint Paul, MN 55103

612.605.7978

www.commoncause.org/mn

February 23, 2022

HF2683 - We support increased meaningful transparency and accountability for Minnesotans. HF2683 is a step forward in that direction.

I am Annstacia Belladonna-Carrera, Executive Director for Common Cause MN. Common Cause MN is a nonpartisan grassroots organization with approximately 18,000 bipartisan members and supporters statewide. I am here because voters deserve an ethical government that works for everyone. Far too often, Minnesotans feel like they don't have a voice in our democracy - at least not when it comes to competing with special interest.

With the growing injection of big money in Minnesota politics, the more frequent lack of transparency in our legislature, and the increasing instances of conflicts of interest or questions of ethics by some politicians and wealthy special interests - creating an ethical and clean government that works in the public interest continues to be one of our core focuses.

Accountability: We'd like to see HF2683 having more defined "teeth" with regard to what happens should there be a violation of its provisions. Currently someone who fails to submit the Statement of Economic Interest under 10A.09 pays a fine of \$1,000. Perhaps including language that speaks to suspending the lobbyist's privileges would be more attuned with actual accountability, otherwise the effects of HF2683 become symbolic at best and does very little to contribute to increased accountability.

Transparency: We also recommend that if the committee moves HF2683 it should do so after having responsibly appropriate funds to the MN Campaign Finance Board, or other entity who would be responsible for oversight. For this to be meaningful, filings should be electronic and readily available to the public in a manner that is readily searchable. Increasing an agency's responsibility for oversight without needed resources is also more symbolic than effective in the desired outcomes of increasing transparency as laid out in HF2683.

We are encouraged and grateful to Rep. Draskowski for moving HF2683. HF2683 is a step in the right direction.

Respectfully Submitted,

Annastacia Belladonna-Carrera, Executive Director