



STATE OF MINNESOTA
Office of Minnesota Secretary of State
Steve Simon

February 14, 2024

Senate Elections Committee
Minnesota State Senate
Room 1200, Minnesota Senate Bldg.
95 University Ave W, Saint Paul, MN 55155

Dear Senate Elections Committee Members:

I write to share my support of Senate File 3550 which further strengthens the prohibition of the dissemination of deep fakes and their potential to influence our elections.

Artificial Intelligence (AI), which powers deep fakes, is not a threat to American democracy in and of itself, but it is an emerging and powerful amplifier of existing threats. If AI-generated deep fakes are used to misdirect voters, the result could be disruption and disenfranchisement. All of us who touch the election process must be watchful and proactive as these new tools and technologies emerge in our society.

In the hands of those who want to mislead, AI tools can represent a revolution in their ability to cause harm and corrode faith in our systems. These tools have, in recent weeks, been used to create deep fakes that attempt to misinform voters as states across the country hold their presidential nomination primaries. I commend the legislature for taking the step last year to prohibit the dissemination of such deep fakes in Minnesota and support the further strengthening of that provision in SF 3550. I know our state will be a leader in this area, just as we lead the nation in so many other issues related to the protection of elections and voting.

In addition to supporting prohibition of AI-generated false depictions like deep fakes designed to influence our elections, election officials around the nation have renewed the call to the public to look to trusted sources for election information to minimize the risk of deep fakes and other misinformation taking hold. If a voter has a question about an election process or eligibility, they should always look to the information from the Office of the Secretary of State and their local election officials as the trusted source.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steve Simon".

Steve Simon
SECRETARY OF STATE