

April 14, 2026

**Re: Support for the Omnibus Environment Finance bill SF4214**

Chair Hawj and Members of the Committee:

The Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC) and the Solid Waste Administrators Association (SWAA), appreciate the opportunity to offer comments on the Omnibus Environment Finance bill (SF4214).

The battery stewardship is a top priority for counties. This legislation addresses a real and growing problem for counties, solid waste facilities, and the public: the fire risk, collection burden, and increasing cost associated with batteries entering the waste stream. When batteries are discarded improperly, they can spark fires in collection vehicles, transfer stations, and processing facilities, putting workers and the public at risk and creating significant financial consequences for local governments and the private sector. Inaction on this issue only increases those risks and costs.

We also want to acknowledge the substantial work that has gone into this bill. Our associations along with Senator Kupec, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, and many other stakeholders have spent considerable time working through concerns and revising the proposal. The amendment being offered today to this proposal reflects that ongoing collaboration and makes additional changes intended to address remaining stakeholder concerns.

AMC and SWAA believe battery stewardship is a practical and responsible solution. It shifts more of the burden onto the product system itself, improves safe management, and helps reduce the number of batteries ending up in local waste systems where they create hazards that counties and facilities are left to manage.

We would also like to request your support for the infectious waste report (Art. 1, Sec. 5). The regularity of this very specialized and dangerous waste showing up at facilities that are not equipped to handle it is not acceptable. We support taking a closer look at the issue and developing solutions that will ensure better compliance with the law.

We strongly support both the battery stewardship and infectious waste provisions in SF4214 and encourage the committee to advance the bill.

Thank you for your consideration and for your leadership on this important issue.

Sincerely,



Brian Martinson, Policy Analyst  
Association of Minnesota Counties



Randy Kiser, Executive Director  
Solid Waste Administrators Association