

April 9, 2026

Senator Foug Hawj
Chair, Senate Environment, Climate, and Legacy Committee
3231 Minnesota Senate Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55155

RE: Support – S.F. 1690, Battery Product Stewardship

Dear Chair Hawj and Members of the Senate Environment, Climate, and Legacy Committee,

The Partnership on Waste and Energy (Partnership) is a Joint Powers Board consisting of Hennepin, Ramsey and Washington counties, formed to address waste management and energy issues. The Partnership seeks to end waste, promote renewable energy and enhance the health and resiliency of communities we serve while advancing equity and responding to the challenges of a changing climate.

Electronic waste and batteries must be kept out of the mixed municipal solid waste stream and disposal facilities. Waste facilities are seeing increases in fires due to growing numbers of lithium-ion batteries being placed in trash and recycling and are struggling to manage the associated liability issues. Additionally, keeping these materials out of the waste stream reduces waste toxicity and helps prevent risks to the environment and public health, all while recovering valuable products and critical materials for reuse and recycling.

Current laws are outdated and leave financial and operational burdens on counties and taxpayers. This is contrary to the original purpose of these statutes, which were written to hold manufacturers responsible. These statutes also do not adequately account for the significant transformation over the years in the nature and types of electronics and rechargeable batteries that consumers purchase. Changes in existing laws are needed to reflect the current nature of products and provide flexibility for an evolving marketplace.

The Partnership on Waste and Energy supports S.F. 1690 to update the various existing battery laws and put responsibility for managing loose batteries—including those that can be easily removed from battery-containing products—on the industries producing them. This bill is designed for our residents who lack access to collection options and accurate information on keeping battery products out of trash and recycling bins and getting them to a site for recycling or safe management. It also provides mechanisms to relieve financial burdens and risks on counties and taxpayers.

Thank you, Chair Hawj, for hearing S.F. 1690. We encourage advancement to make recycling batteries more convenient and less costly for consumers. We also look forward to future discussions to address the challenges of electronic waste and battery-containing electronic devices not currently addressed in S.F. 1690.

Sincerely,



Commissioner Debbie Goettel, Hennepin County
Chair, Partnership on Waste and Energy