

**State Grange of Minnesota  
2017 Legislative Write-In Campaign  
Make Your Voice Heard!**

**How to write a letter to your representative:**

- 1) Find out who your representatives are - and get their office number. Do this online at <http://www.gis.leg.mn/iMaps/districts/>**
- 2) Copy attached PDF letter(s) and sign your name, or write your own letters. You can also use the attached letters as a guide and add any details you would like to your personalized letter.**
- 3) Address your envelope - letters are addressed differently when sent to representatives vs. senators so make sure you are addressing yours correctly.**

**Writing to a representative? Address your letter like the following:**

**Honorable (Full Name)  
Minnesota House of Representatives  
(Room #) State Office Building  
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
St. Paul, MN 55155-1298**

**Writing to a senator? Address your letter like the following:**

**Honorable (Full Name)  
Minnesota State Senate  
(Room #) Minnesota Senate Building  
95 University Avenue West  
St. Paul, MN 55155-1606**

**Why These Bills?**

In any legislative year there are hundreds of bills introduced, so why did I choose to focus on these specific bills? Learn more about the bills chosen for this letter writing campaign and why I chose to focus on them. But remember, if there are bills you are hearing about in the news that interest you don't be afraid to write your own letter!

**Once you've written tell us** - share pictures of your letters or addressed envelopes with your neighbors and other Grangers. Make sure others know you are invested in our political process and you care about what is going on in St. Paul!

**HF 1287 - letter advocating for this bill can be found on page 4**

**What this bill actually says and will do:** If this bill is passed it will set aside \$1,100,000 in 2018 and 2019 for the commissioner of agriculture to create grants for Second Harvest Heartland on behalf of the six Feeding America food banks that serve Minnesota. These grants will be used to pay farmers for costs incurred when harvesting, packaging, and transferring surplus fruits, vegetables, or other commodities that would otherwise go unharvested. This food will be donated to Second Harvest Heartland food banks across America.

**Why this bill?** I chose this specific bill for two reasons. First, is the Grange's consistent and historic commitment to community service. Setting aside money for these grants will provide fresh fruit and produce for some of the most vulnerable Minnesotans. Second, in providing funds to harvest food that would otherwise go unsold we will be supporting Minnesota farmers.

**HF 698 - letter advocating against this bill can be found on page 5**

**What this bill actually says and will do:** This bill is proposing an amendment to the Minnesota Constitution that would divert all the funds set aside by Minnesota voters in 2008 when we passed the Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment to pay for deficient roads, bridges and clean water. These "legacy funds" were originally intended to protect drinking water sources; to protect, enhance, and restore wetlands, prairies, forests, and fish, game, and wildlife habitat; to preserve arts and cultural heritage; and to support parks.

**Why this bill?** Diverting the current "Legacy funds" away from their intended use will most impact rural Minnesota by taking away needed money from small museums, parks, and cultural heritage programs. The importance of these small institutions, located in rural Minnesota, cannot be overstated. Often these institutions play a key role in educating local students, training teachers, serving homeschoolers, and play an important economic role in the local community. Cultural heritage organizations located in the Twin Cities have a far greater likelihood of finding more sources of funding than rural institutions and the grants provided from "Legacy Funds" are a vital source of funding for these smaller organizations.

**SF 758 - letter advocating for this bill can be found on page 6**

**What this bill actually says and will do:** This bill is proposed setting aside \$1 million for a small pilot program to work with nonprofits to provide cars to low income individuals and families in Minnesota.

**Why this bill?** This program will help ensure some of the most vulnerable Minnesotans are provided with needed access to transportation, allowing them to get to and from work. With limited access to public transit and greater distances to travel programs like this have the

potential to positively impact Greater Minnesota communities, providing all citizens with access to reliable transportation, to get to and from work, and fully engage with their communities.

**SF 839 - letter opposing this bill can be found on page 7**

**What this bill actually says and will do:** This bill would stop the current Minnesota Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board from creating any new rules for legislators to have to abide by.

**Why this bill?** This proposal will limit the ability of the Minnesota Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board to do its job - which is to ensure our elections remain free and fair. This board regulates money in politics and is a safeguard against allowing special interest to swing elections in their favor by donating large sums of money to political parties or specific candidates.

**SF 1195 - letter opposing this bill can be found on page 8**

**What this bill actually says and will do:** This bill would prevent and prohibit any current local governments in Minnesota from passing laws taxing or banning the use of plastic bags in stores.

**Why this bill?** In 2016 Sisters Ashley Wyatt and Amy Amberger presented a resolution at their local DFL Caucus advocating for the State of Minnesota to pass a bill that would encourage stores and consumers to use paper or reusable bags.

Dear Senator or Dear Representative (Last Name),

I write to you today in support of H.F. 1287 that was first introduced on February 15th by Representatives Debra Kiel, Tim Miller, and Jeanne Poppe. As you work on our biannual budget and spending bills, I ask you to make funding decisions that will support hungry families in Minnesota.

I urge you to authorize grant funds to Second Harvest Heartland on behalf of the six Feeding America food banks that serve Minnesota. As I am sure you are already aware Second Harvest Heartland and these six food banks make a difference in the lives of thousands of Minnesotans each year.

By providing funds to compensate agricultural producers for costs incurred to harvest and pack surplus produce food banks across Minnesota will be able to provide the most vulnerable with the healthiest food possible. We can accomplish all this while continuing to support Minnesota farmers.

Sincerely,  
(Your Name)  
(Your Address)  
(City, State Zip)

Dear Senator or Dear Representative (Last Name),

I write to you today in reference to H.F. 698, authored by Representative Steve Green. I urge you to oppose this attempt to replace the legacy funding that was authorized by Minnesota voters in 2008.

While funding for Minnesota roads, bridges, and clean water is important the work being done by organizations supported from currently Legacy Funds cannot be understated. Grants provided to our outdoor and cultural heritage programs and institutions are vital to ensuring these organizations survive into the future. Our cultural heritage organizations play a key role in educating our students each year, training teachers, serving homeschoolers, and much more. They also play a key economic role around our entire state.

Many offer innovative programming: working with underserved youth, offering programs for families living with autism or Alzheimer's, and serving urban, suburban, and rural communities alike. These organizations are community anchors, addressing challenges in the fields of education, energy, disabilities, and poverty.

I strongly urge you to oppose any measure to limit the funding that has been set aside for Minnesota's outdoor heritage, parks and trails, and our arts and cultural heritage.

Sincerely,  
(Your Name)  
(Your Address)  
(City, State Zip)

Dear Senator or Dear Representative (Last Name),

I write to you today in support of S.F. 758 that was first introduced on February 9th by Senators Bill Ingebrigtsen, David Tomassoni, Gary Dahms, Paul Anderson, and Torrey Westrom. As you work on our biannual budget and spending bills, I ask you to appropriate funds to create a pilot program that will help ensure some of the most vulnerable Minnesotans are provided with needed transportation.

The proposed program “Getting to Work” will ensure non-profit organizations are able to offer low income individuals and families free and reduced-priced cars and auto repair services. While these services already exist throughout the state programs like this will ensure they continue to spread to communities that do not currently have them. The need to ensure transportation for all Minnesotans cannot be overstated.

For many transportation remains a major hurdle to employment, particularly in greater Minnesota. Providing a reliable way for individuals to get to and from work will ensure more Minnesotans are able to earn and living and hopefully remain off government subsidies. Though transportation to and from work is important it is not the only benefit. Minnesotans who have access to reliable transportation will have greater opportunities to fully participate in their communities.

This small pilot program could help secure 240 used cars and repair more than 2,000 in just one year. I strongly urge you to support this bill and the pilot program it establishes.

Sincerely,  
(Your Name)  
(Your Address)  
(City, State Zip)

Dear Senator or Dear Representative (Last Name),

I write to you today in reference to S.F. 839, authored by Senators Mary Kiffmeyer and Mark Koran. I urge you to oppose this attempt to weaken the Minnesota Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board.

The essence of our republic lies in our free and fair elections, an issue that is more important than ever now given the recent and ongoing scandal concerning President Trump and his campaign, cabinet, and personal ties to Russian. In order to make sure Minnesota's elections continue to remain free and fair the Campaign Finance Board has to be able to make and enforce rules - especially new ones.

In 2015 the highly respected Center for Public Integrity completed an "integrity investigation" of Minnesota and we were found lacking. We ranked 28th in the nation, and earned an "F" grade in six of 13 categories - including Public Access to Information, Executive, Legislative, and Judicial Accountability, and Ethics Enforcement Agencies. For a state that so prides itself on our citizens political activity and high voter turnout this is disgraceful. Minnesota should set an example to the rest of the country on how to ensure our political process is transparent and our elected officials cannot be bought.

I strongly urge you to oppose any measure to limit the Minnesota Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board's ability to make and enforce rules. I would ask that you go a step further and ask your fellow legislators to take a new look at Minnesota's campaign finance rules and pass new legislation strengthening the board and empowering it to make Minnesota an example to the rest of the country on how to run elections.

Sincerely,  
(Your Name)  
(Your Address)

Dear Senator or Dear Representative (Last Name),

I write to you today in reference to S.F. 1195, authored by Senators Bill Ingebrigtsen, David Tomassoni, Dan Sparks, and Justin Eichorn. I urge you to oppose this attempt to prevent local governments from prohibiting the use of plastic bags in their jurisdiction.

Throughout Minnesota today thousands of plastic bags are used annually and their continued use has real and direct impact on our environment. Discarded bags pollute the land and water across our state and as they break into smaller pieces are often consumed by wildlife. Production of these bags also has an environmental cost since they are not made from renewable resources. Production of these bags is energy intensive, producing just nine bags uses the same amount of energy it costs to drive a car more than half a mile - all this for a bag that has an average useful life span of 12 minutes.

Minnesotans across the state are currently paying to produce and clean up thousands of bags that are detrimental to our environment. Local governments should be able and encouraged to pass laws prohibiting their use in local shops. I strongly urge you to oppose any measure that would limit Minnesota communities right to decide for themselves whether or not they want to impose taxes or bans on the use of plastic bags in their community.

Sincerely,  
(Your Name)  
(Your Address)