



February 11, 2020

Representative Raymond Dehn
537 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Senator Ann Rest
2217 Minnesota Senate Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

RE: HF 3068; SF 2986 – Presidential primary voter data access regulated

Dear Representative Dehn and Senator Rest,

On behalf of the Municipal Legislative Commission (MLC), a coalition of 16 suburban communities, I write in support of HF 3068, which would modify and regulate presidential primary voter data access, and allow for voters to opt-out of having their data shared with the major political parties.

The MLC supports municipalities and their city officials who ensure local government is effectively serving its citizens, which includes their ability to maintain a reputation of nonpartisanship. We are concerned with the impact the current language in statute, regarding Minnesota's presidential primary and lack of guardrails around voter data, would have on local officials' ability to remain nonpartisan.

Minnesota Statutes 201.091, subdivision 4a currently states:

Presidential primary political party list. The secretary of state must maintain a list of the voters who voted in a presidential nomination primary and the political party each voter selected. Information maintained on the list is private data on individuals as defined under section 13.02, subdivision 12, except that the secretary of state must provide the list to the chair of each major political party.

The language does not explicitly limit how the major political parties can use this data. Many of our members are concerned their data will be made public and they will no longer be perceived as nonpartisan, negatively impacting their ability to perform their jobs. As a result, many nonpartisan local officials have stated they will not participate in the presidential primary.

While we would prefer that voter data not be recorded at all, we understand that recordation is a requirement in the rules of at least two major political parties to ensure party delegates are bound to the results of the election. As such, we support the language contained in HF 3068, which places restrictions on how the data can be used, as well as allows voters to opt-out of having their data shared with the major political parties.

We hope to continue the conversation about our concerns as this legislation is considered moving forward. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Hovland". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath.

Jim Hovland, Mayor of Edina, Chair of MLC