



February 27, 2023

The Honorable Mike Freiberg, Chair
House Elections Finance and Policy Committee
381 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

The Honorable Paul Torkelson, Republican Lead
House Elections Finance and Policy Committee
261 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Freiberg, Republican Lead Torkelson, and Members of the Committee:

Students United is the statewide student association representing all future, current, and former Minnesota State students attending the seven Minnesota State universities: Bemidji State University, Minnesota State University – Moorhead, Minnesota State University – Mankato, Metropolitan State University, Southwest Minnesota State University, St. Cloud State University, and Winona State University.

With such a large and engaged portion of the electorate reflected on our campuses, ahead of the 2022 midterm elections, Students United worked closely with student leaders, campus administrators, and the Minnesota State system office to register and turn out thousands of students to vote. Our students recognize that active participation in our democracy is a fundamental responsibility, and that is why civic engagement is a priority for Students United. Yet, we know more must be done to ensure that students are able to lift their voices each election.

While Minnesota has historically been a high turn-out state, it has not kept pace with innovative policies that allow for greater access to the ballot box. In fact, the [Cost of Voting Index](#) now ranks Minnesota 24th in the country in relative ease of voting. This can be attributed to the fact that Minnesota has not adopted more policies that remove barriers to voting, and that is why Students United stands in support of [HF495](#).

This legislation removes a potential barrier, making it easier for students across our state to vote and establish a habit of civic engagement. Importantly, HF495 accomplishes this while maintaining protections for student privacy and security. For these reasons, we are excited to stand in support of HF495 and we thank Representative Pursell for authoring this bill.

Best,

Kaileigh Weber, 2022-23 State Chair