



MINNESOTA

CAMPAIGN FINANCE BOARD

February 7, 2020

Dear Senator or Representative:

The Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board administers three major programs: campaign finance registration and disclosure for state-level offices, lobbyist registration and reporting, and economic interest disclosure by public officials. These programs help build and sustain public confidence in the integrity of Minnesota election campaigns and the decisions made on behalf of Minnesota's citizens by public officials. These programs were created under Minnesota Statutes Chapter 10A, a statute which has not been substantially revised for decades and needs revisions to effectively serve the public interest.

Recommendations to improve the economic interest and campaign finance programs were provided to the legislature in 2019, and are brought forward again for your consideration. This year, the Board is developing recommendations to change the focus of lobbyist registration and reporting. A brief overview of the recommendations by program is provided below.

Economic interest disclosure program The Board approved technical recommendations that improve the efficiency of existing reporting requirements. The Board also adopted policy recommendations that provide better disclosure of potential conflicts of interest by requiring the disclosure of government contracts involving public officials and assets owned by another if the assets provide direct financial benefit to the official. The Board's recommendations regarding the economic interest disclosure program were approved by unanimous vote.

Campaign finance program The Board unanimously approved technical recommendations that will improve the efficiency of existing public disclosure requirements and a policy recommendation on the use of cybercurrency in campaigns. The Board also adopted a policy recommendation on express advocacy, which is not supported by two Board members but is brought back to the legislature in recognition that the issue is important and remains unresolved.

Lobbyist program The Board believes that the current reporting requirements for lobbyists fail to provide meaningful disclosure to the public. The Board is working with the public, including the lobbying community, to develop revised registration and reporting requirements for the lobbying program and will provide the recommendations to the legislature in October of this year.

If you are interested in moving forward with amendments to Chapter 10A and wish additional information about the Board's concerns and recommendations, please contact Jeff Sigurdson, the Executive Director, at (651) 539-1189 to answer questions or set up a meeting.

Thank you for your interest and your service.

Sincerely,

Robert Moilanen – Chair

Gary Haugen – Vice Chair

Carolyn Flynn

Margaret Leppik

Daniel Rosen

Stephen Swanson