

Rep. Larry Kraft 2023-24 Term

Lead author on these bills that became law

St. Louis Park Infrastructure

Cedar Lake Rd and Louisiana Ave reconstruction

- **Description:** \$5M bonding for the reconstruction of a key and regionally significant intersection in St. Louis Park.
- **Benefits:** Increases safety, reduces greenhouse gas emissions, and improves biking and pedestrian facilities

Climate Related

Commercial Building Energy Codes

- **Description:** The energy portion of the state building code will be updated every three years with increasing levels of energy efficiency, so that by 2036, new commercial buildings will be 80% more energy efficient.
- **Benefits:** Reduced greenhouse gas emissions and healthier and more comfortable new buildings. Buildings generate 40% of Minnesota's greenhouse gas emissions; commercial buildings comprise about half that amount.

Residential Energy Codes

- **Description:** The energy portion of the residential state building code will be updated every three years with increasing levels of energy efficiency, so that by 2038, new homes will be 70% more energy efficient.
- **Benefits:** Reduced greenhouse gas emissions and healthier and more comfortable new homes. Buildings generate 40% of Minnesota's greenhouse gas emissions; homes comprise a bit over half that amount.

Energy Benchmarking for Commercial Buildings

- **Description:** Requires MN buildings over 50,000 square feet to benchmark and publicly share their energy usage
- **Benefits:** Addresses existing commercial buildings and on average, results in a 1-3% annual reduction in energy usage in buildings that benchmark. Provides a foundation for additional programs to help building owners lower energy usage, reduce energy bills, and decrease greenhouse gas emissions.

Grid Enhancing Technologies (GETs)

- **Description:** Requires utilities that operate a significant amount of high capacity power transmission lines in Minnesota to study and create an implementation plan for GETs. GETs are a set of hardware and software technologies that are typically modest in cost, can be deployed relatively quickly, and can increase capacity on a transmission line by 10-40%.
- **Benefits:** In order to hit our goal of 100% clean electricity by 2040, we need more high speed transmission capacity. These superhighways of the grid are often congested, preventing more renewable energy from being connected and increasing costs for MN ratepayers. GETs are a quick and inexpensive way of expanding capacity on existing transmission lines.

Transmission in Highway Right-of-Way

- **Description:** Requires the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) to allow high speed power transmission lines to be located alongside major roads.
- **Benefits:** A transmission owner can deal with one entity rather than tens or hundreds of landowners, saving potentially many millions of dollars and years of time. Will make it easier to build more transmission capacity faster thereby facilitating more renewable energy and making it easier to achieve our statewide goal of 100% clean electricity by 2040.

Local Climate Action Planning grants

- **Description:** \$5 million for grants to local units of government to create climate action plans, up to \$50,000 per grant.
- **Benefits:** Helps cities, towns, and other local governments create climate action plans to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and/or adapt to climate change impacts.

Global Warming Refrigerants

- **Description:** Updates the Minnesota Building Code to link more directly to federal changes regarding refrigerants.
- **Benefits:** Allows for an orderly and rapid transition to a new generation of refrigerants that have as much as 75% less global warming potential than the existing generation. This is significant because the cooling industry generates about 10% of global greenhouse gas emissions.

Climate risk disclosure for MN banks

- **Description:** Requires MN banks and credit unions with over \$1B of assets to evaluate their risk due to climate change.
- **Benefits:** Identification of climate risks to MN financial system.

Transportation & Climate

Climate Smart Transportation and Land Use

- **Description:** Requires any capacity expansion project on the MN Dept of Transportation (MnDOT) network that would increase greenhouse gas emissions or vehicle miles traveled (VMT) to have those increases offset, either within the project or by projects elsewhere in the state. Also requires the Metropolitan Council to take the transportation greenhouse gas emissions and VMT targets from MnDOT, incorporate them into a regional climate action plan with a focus on land use, and then build climate planning into the next round of comprehensive plans (for 2050) that all cities in the metro area will start in 2026.
- **Benefits:** Creates a structure for the systemic change we need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from transportation, our #1 source of greenhouse gas emissions in MN. Also builds climate change planning and climate conscious land use into all metro cities' planning going forward.

Update to Climate Smart Transportation bill

- **Description:** Updates 2023 law to include implementation recommendations from Impact Mitigation Working Group, which was created by the 2023 law.
- **Benefits:** Improves implementation of law.

EV charging infrastructure

- **Description:** Creates EV charging infrastructure tied to the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) program to create long range charging infrastructure on major routes throughout Minnesota.
- **Benefits:** \$85 million (\$68M federal, \$17M state) over 5 years to create alternative fuel corridors with charging stations at least every 50 miles.

Economic Development & Climate

Minnesota Energy Alley - \$3M funding

- **Description:** Funding for the Grid Catalyst clean energy accelerator, which works to accelerate clean energy deployment by connecting entrepreneurs to project demonstration opportunities, mentorship and development, and investments to grow their business.
- **Benefits:** Clean energy innovation and jobs in Minnesota.

Housing & Climate

Single Staircase Apartment Building Study

- **Description:** Funds a study on whether apartment buildings between four and six stories with a single staircase can achieve life safety outcomes similar to current codes. Today all apartment buildings over three stories must have two staircases/means of egress. However, in many places around the world as well as in several locations in the U.S. single staircase buildings are allowed up to at least six stories.
- **Benefits:** Single staircase buildings are more space efficient, increasing affordability, and are more energy efficient as units typically have walls facing two directions, increasing natural light and cross ventilation. They can also more easily support multi-bedroom units for families.

Waste & Recycling

Boat Shrink Wrap Plastic

- **Description:** Requires producers of boat shrink wrap plastic in Minnesota to fund a product stewardship organization that will collect and recycle the material
- **Benefits:** Remove most of the estimated six million pounds of boat shrink wrap plastic used annually in Minnesota from going to landfills or incinerators. This will reduce pollution, improve water quality, and limit the need for fossil fuel that would be needed to make more virgin plastic.

Regenerative Agriculture

Carbon market study (co-led with a Democratic and Republican colleague)

- **Description:** Studies the creation of a carbon market to help fund farmer adoption of regenerative agriculture practices
- **Benefits:** Regenerative agriculture practices such as no-till farming, cover crops, and precision fertilizer management can sequester carbon, improve water quality, and improve the health of the soil and food grown in it.

Democracy

Voter pre-registration for 16 & 17 year olds

- **Description:** Allows anyone that is 16 or 17 to pre-register to vote, so when they turn 18 they are automatically registered.
- **Benefits:** Proven to increase voter turnout in the 18-29 age range. Helps young people to form lifelong voting habits.

Voter pre-registration information to 16 & 17 year olds

- **Description:** Requires high schools to provide voter registration and pre-registration information to anyone 16 or older twice per year. Previously high schools have been required to provide this information only to students who would be eligible to vote in the next election.
- **Benefits:** Gets young people involved in voting and helps them form lifelong voting habits.

Excavation

Excavation Safety

- **Description:** Updates outdated excavation statute to improve reporting, increase stakeholder communication, and leverage new technology.
- **Benefits:** Improved excavation safety throughout Minnesota.

Healthcare & Insurance

Health Insurance Network Adequacy, especially for mental health services

- **Description:** Updates network adequacy parameters used by the MN Department of Health to determine if an insurance company's in-network offerings are sufficient. For two years, requires health insurance plans to accept new mental health providers, if they will agree to the same contractual terms as providers currently in-network. Also requires the MN Dept. of Health to study network adequacy and develop longer-term recommendations.
- **Benefits:** Immediate action to address the mental health crisis with more in-network options for patients, while also creating long-term recommendations for changes.

Hearing Aids insurance coverage

- **Description:** Health insurance must cover a pair of hearing aids every three years for anyone instead of just those who are 18 years of age and younger.
- **Benefits:** Hearing aids now covered in health insurance for all Minnesotans.

Mental Health Parity Notification in Long Term Disability Insurance

- **Description:** Requires long term disability insurance providers to notify purchasers if policies have mental health limitations. Today, most long term disability insurance policies limit mental health benefits as compared to physical health though many if not most policyholders are unaware of the limitation.
- **Benefits:** More public awareness of what is in policies and more long term disability insurance policies without mental health limitations.

Consumer Protection

Net Neutrality

- **Description:** Ensures Internet Service Providers (ISPs) provide a level playing field and treat all data equally.
- **Benefits:** Prevents discrimination against content or services by ensuring that ISPs cannot block, throttle, or prioritize data based on their commercial interests. It safeguards an open and democratic online environment, and is key to maintaining fair access to information and services for all users.

Contractor recovery fund modified to include claims against solar installers

- **Description:** Requires residential solar installers to become licensed as residential contractors, and therefore pay into the contractor recovery fund.
- **Benefits:** Consumer protection for residential solar customers. The Contractor Recovery Fund compensates owners or lessees of residential property in Minnesota who have suffered loss due to a licensed contractor's fraudulent, deceptive or dishonest practice, failure of performance, or if the contractor goes out of business.

ITIN Number for Utility Service

- **Description:** Make it clear that utilities can not deny service to customers with ITIN numbers. The ITIN is a number provided by the IRS as a way for people without social security numbers to file their taxes. In order to obtain an ITIN, the applicant's identity has to be verified by the Federal Government.
- **Benefits:** Makes it easier for people with ITIN numbers to hook up utilities and to pay their bills

First Responders

Fire safety account fee increased

- **Description:** The Fire Safety Account was created by the Legislature in 2006 with a 0.65% surcharge on homeowners insurance premiums. This account is a vital funding source within the fire service, and yet it has been raided during tough economic times and was reduced to 0.5% in 2013. This legislation has returned the surcharge to 0.65%.
- **Benefits:** Ensures that the Minnesota Board of Firefighter Training and Education, the State Fire Marshal's Office, and the Statewide Response Teams - including Hazmat, Task Force 1 Structural Collapse Team, and the Air Rescue Team - are provided the resources they need to do their jobs and keep us safe. It will also help provide more dollars for firefighter training - which especially can be an issue in greater MN.

Telecommunication

Broadband and Telecom Options

- **Description:** Removes outdated language that limits local communities from developing municipal broadband infrastructure. Also adds protections for landline customers.
- **Benefits:** More consumer options and increased protections for landline customers, especially in greater Minnesota.