

**MNCOGI supports staff funding (contained in SF 888) for
Legislative Commission on Data Practices**

Dear conferees,

The Minnesota Coalition on Government Information (MNCOGI) supports provisions of SF888 that provide staff funding for the Legislative Commission on Data Practices.

Commission performs important data policy work

The Legislative Commission on Data Practices and Personal Privacy (established in 2014) has provided the Minnesota Legislature with a valuable resource for researching data-related issues, and for developing legislative policy expertise. During its 2014 term, the Commission took testimony on a wide variety of matters subsequently discussed during the 2015 legislative session - including police body cameras and health plan data. Commission hearings helped to disseminate information to legislators who sit on relevant policy committees, and also set the stage for additional discussions that followed.

MNCOGI supports Commission appropriation in SF 888

MNCOGI supports the work of the Commission, and further supports the modest financial appropriation contained in SF 888 that would provide staff compensation for that work. To date, the work of the Commission has been carried on without staff funding, which has limited its scope in the face of other duties carried on by the legislative staff assigned to it. The appropriation contained in SF 888 would ensure an amount of dedicated staff time, and would permit the Commission greater leeway in conducting research into the complex policy matters that it evaluates.

SF 888 sets out \$35,000 for staff support in fiscal year 2016, and an identical amount for fiscal year 2017. MNCOGI supports the inclusion of such language in the final version of the State Government Finance Bill.

Sincerely,

Matt Ehling,
MNCOGI Legislative Issues Committee