

Summary of Other Legislative Issues of Importance

2019 Legislative Session

Legislative Committee Recommendations

Background

The Southwest Regional Development Commission (SRDC) is a nine-county Regional Development Commission as established under Minnesota Statute §462.381-462.398 the “Regional Development Act.” The SRDC represents local units of government in Cottonwood, Jackson, Lincoln, Lyon, Murray, Nobles, Pipestone, Redwood and Rock counties. The Legislative Committee of the SRDC has reviewed existing SRDC positions on a number of issues and determined that while these issues are of importance to the SRDC, they may or may not come up in any given legislative session. Therefore, the SRDC has determined that the following issues will be observed for activity in the upcoming session and acted upon as the situation warrants.

High Priority Support Issues

Environmental

The SRDC supports local communities’ efforts to align the regulatory environment to better facilitate local and regional economic development.

Energy

The SRDC supports the removal of the wind and solar energy production taxes from the calculations for levy limit base in levy limit language and supports the continued development of renewable energy systems including wind and solar in southwest Minnesota.

Residential PACE

The SRDC supports the development of a residential Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) Program.

Local Option Sales Tax

The SRDC supports legislation allowing municipalities who pass a local sales tax referendum to adopt up to a ½ cent sales tax for specific purposes as described in current regulations without having to then bring the issue back to the legislature for approval. Given the short time frames for legislative sessions and the amount of work to be done, it is recommended that local referendum results be the determining factor, allowing both local communities and legislators to concentrate their efforts on immediate priorities.



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Other Issues of Importance

Transportation

The SRDC supports continuing efforts to fund a comprehensive transportation system in Minnesota, including the possibility of a 1/2 ¢ sales tax to help fund the State Highway System.

Managed Care Transportation

The SRDC supports efforts to develop an effective means of providing transportation for medical care in rural areas.

BDPI

The SRDC supports the GMNP policy position of ongoing funding for the Greater MN Business Development Public Infrastructure Grant Program (“BDPI”).

Mental Health

The SRDC supports efforts to increase accessibility to mental health care in rural areas. The SRDC supports the Association of Minnesota Counties’ (AMC) position calling for state policy and financing to assure a full range of mental health services that: promote mental health, prevent mental health problems, treat mental health conditions, and allow people with mental health conditions to function as effectively as possible in the community.

Aging

SRDC supports continued expansion of access to home and community-based service options for older adults, in order to provide meaningful choice for consumers and recognizes the importance of nursing homes for our most vulnerable and supports increased reimbursements to allow our nursing homes to remain viable.

The SRDC supports the positions of the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO), including:

- Reauthorization of the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) with an emphasis on public works and planning grants, especially in rural areas.
- USDA rural development grant programs for infrastructure improvements, business development, community facilities, housing, and broadband services.
- The promotion of affordable, advanced, and accessible telecommunications and broadband services in underserved and rural areas.



SRDC Legislative Committee

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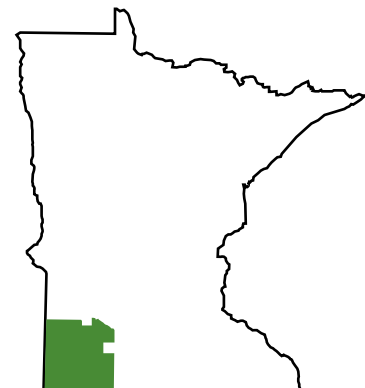
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