

**CONSTITUTION of the ENVIRONMENTAL CAUCUS  
of the MINNESOTA DFL  
As accepted June 27,2020**

**ARTICLE ONE: NAME AND OFFICES**

**Section 1. Name of Organization.** The name of the organization is the Environmental Caucus of the Minnesota Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party, hereafter called the Environmental Caucus, or caucus, in this document.

**Section 2. Principal Office.** The principal office of the caucus shall be at the headquarters of the DFL. The caucus may maintain an email address, the contents of which will be monitored and routed to the secretary, communications officer, chair and vice chair. A U.S. Post Office box will be established in the name of the Environmental Caucus and will be monitored by the treasurer or other officer appointed by the chair.

**ARTICLE TWO: STATEMENT OF MISSION and PURPOSE**

**Section 1. Mission.** The mission of the Environmental Caucus is to educate and mobilize the citizens of Minnesota *to address the climate crisis and to protect, preserve, and restore the natural environment.*

**Section 2. Purposes.** The purposes of the Environmental Caucus are to:

- 1) Educate the DFL, the electorate, candidates for office, and elected representatives with regard to issues that impact the climate and environment and threaten the health and safety of the biosphere at the local, state, national, and global levels.
- 2) Foster active participation in the DFL by citizens who are knowledgeable of climate change, energy, natural resources, and environmental issues.
- 3) Determine and share the voting record and views of elected officials and candidates on environmental issues.
- 4) Endorse DFL candidates for office.
- 5) Support the DFL Party Platform and Action Agenda items related to energy, natural resources, and environmental issues.
- 6) Mobilize the electorate to vote for DFL endorsed candidates who support party platform and action agenda items related to climate, energy, and the environment.
- 7) Fight the influence and effects of systemic racism and bigotry in every caucus position, presence, and action, from outreach to resolutions to endorsements to legislation the caucus might support. Consider every caucus activity an opportunity to establish a heightened focus on social and environmental justice and take special steps to connect with and work with the

underrepresented communities that can help the caucus do so.

**ARTICLE THREE: MEMBERSHIP**

**Section 1. Eligibility.** Membership in the Environmental Caucus shall be open to all members of The DFL who desire to support the caucus and its mission and purposes.

**Section 2. Membership.** Each year, the membership director shall prepare and distribute a caucus membership form as prescribed by the executive committee to be signed by all persons enrolling in the caucus. The membership director shall ensure that the caucus membership form is widely available for use by all members of the DFL who wish to enroll.

**Section 3. Membership Director.** The chair shall annually appoint a member of the executive committee to serve as membership director. The membership director shall coordinate the recruitment of members, management of membership data, maintenance of membership records and the timely reporting of such records, and determine those members who are in good standing.

**Section 4. Member Voting Rights.** Members in good standing shall have the same voting rights and privileges as bestowed upon them by the Constitution and Bylaws of the Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party of Minnesota. These voting rights and privileges may be exercised in person, or by telephone or other electronic appearances. See Section 6 of Article 4. Voting by proxy is not permitted.

**Section 5. Dues.** Suggested annual dues for the Environmental Caucus are \$20. In accordance with DFL principles and the state constitution and bylaws, membership dues are voluntary.

**Section 6. Members in Good Standing.** Membership is renewable annually as determined and described herein. Members must be in good standing in order to vote at any meeting. A member in good standing has attended in person or electronically a meeting or official event of the caucus in the preceding 12 months, and has affirmed their membership by completing the caucus membership form or otherwise ensuring that the caucus has their current contact information. The membership director or their designee shall determine which members are in good standing in conjunction with the secretary.

**ARTICLE FOUR: MEETINGS**

**Section 1. General Membership meetings.**

Regular meetings of the general membership shall be held at least four times per year. The executive committee shall set the dates of the regular general membership meetings for the following 12 months at its first meeting following the annual membership meeting.. The chair, in consultation with the executive committee may reschedule any regular general membership meeting on at least 10 days' notice. Notice of meetings may be sent by electronic communication to members who have consented to electronic notice, or by social media and the caucus website to those who have not. An agenda shall be prepared by the chair prior to the meetings of the general membership.

**Section 2. Business of the Annual Membership Meeting.** The Environmental Caucus shall hold an annual meeting of the general membership in the second quarter of each year. The meeting shall be held for the purposes of: a) considering amendments to this constitution; b) in odd-numbered years, approving a biennial report and financial statement and designating one caucus officer or executive committee member at large as a voting director of the state DFL executive committee; c) electing members to fill openings for chair, vice chair, outreach officer, communications officer, secretary, treasurer, and executive committee members at large; d) conducting any other business that properly comes before it.

**Section 3. Special Meetings.** The executive committee may call special meetings of the general membership with at least 10 days' notice. Special meetings of the general membership may also be called upon a petition signed by at least 30% of the caucus membership in good standing. The matters considered by a special meeting of the general membership shall be limited to those contained in the call by the executive committee or the petition.

**Section 4. Accessibility.** General membership meetings shall be held in a publicly accessible place in Minnesota, or via electronic media which shall be described in notices of such meetings. The executive committee shall make all reasonably practical arrangements to permit and enhance participation in general membership meetings by members around the state by phone, webcast, or such other methods as are practical and shall, upon request, work to accommodate special needs of individual members. To help keep meetings green and costs low, members are encouraged to gather locally at libraries, homes, or other places with reliable internet access to participate in web meetings and teleconferences.

**Section 5. Quorum requirements.** Twenty percent of Environmental Caucus members in good standing shall constitute a quorum for all meetings of the general membership. Thirty

percent of executive committee members shall constitute a quorum for all its meetings.

**Section 6. Electronic Participation.** To the extent that the means and equipment are available, members of the Environmental Caucus and any of its committees may participate in meetings by teleconference, video conference, or by any communication technology by which all persons participating in the meeting can communicate with each other at the same time. Participation by such means shall constitute attendance at the meeting so long as and for as long as such simultaneous communication is active and enabled.

**Section 7. Rural Areas.** The executive committee shall take all reasonable steps to promote a high degree of participation in caucus activities by rural area members, including but not limited to promoting meetings of caucus members in their respective rural areas and ensuring their effective participation by electronic communications in general membership meetings and in voting on caucus issues.

#### **Section 8. Community Caucus and Other Organizations**

The Environmental Caucus shall coordinate with other DFL community outreach organizations and other organizations to further its goals.

**Section 9. Communicating Meeting Results.** The secretary shall record and post member and executive committee draft meeting minutes per Robert's Rules to the website in a timely manner, and final minutes within 7 days of their approval.

### **ARTICLE FIVE: OFFICERS and THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**Section 1. Officers.** The officers of the caucus shall be a chair, vice chair, secretary, treasurer, communications officer, and outreach officer.

**Section 2. Executive Committee.** The executive committee of the caucus shall consist of the officers, the chair emeritus (if applicable), and up to 16 members at large. In electing officers and members at large, the Environmental Caucus shall strive for representation from all congressional districts; gender balance; and proportional representation of minorities, in accordance with the DFL constitution. Executive committee members at large are to be elected by the general membership at the annual meeting and may be nominated by a nominations committee or from the floor. The executive committee shall meet at least six times each year.

Following election of a new chair, the executive committee may appoint the outgoing chair as chair emeritus to serve on the executive committee for two years .

**Section 3. Qualifications.** Any caucus member may serve as an officer or member at large of the executive committee.

**Section 4. Election and Term of Office.** Officers and executive committee members at large shall be elected by the membership at the annual meeting. The chair, vice chair, communications officer, and one half of the at-large members are elected in odd years. The remaining officers and at-large members are elected in even years. The membership shall also designate an officer or member of the Environmental Caucus executive committee at large to represent the caucus on the state DFL executive committee. Each newly elected executive committee member shall assume his or her role immediately after the meeting is adjourned. All terms shall be two years. Election of officers, but not at-large members, shall be conducted separately to give members an opportunity to be elected to another office if not elected to the office of their first choice.

**Section 5. Resignation and Removal.** Any executive committee member may resign effective upon giving written or electronic notice to the secretary or chair, or the notice may specify a later time for the effectiveness of such resignation. The acceptance of such resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective. The chair may notify any member that has missed two consecutive meetings of the executive committee without excuse that they may be removed from the committee upon a third consecutive unexcused absence. The executive committee may remove the member effective immediately upon adjournment of the third meeting.

**Section 6. Vacancies.** The executive committee may temporarily fill the vacancy of any officer or executive committee member at large for a term ending at the close of the next annual meeting. At the annual meeting, the position shall be filled by election by the general membership for the remainder of the original term or for a new term.

**Section 7. No Compensation.** No officer or executive committee member shall accept any compensation for the performance of their duties other than for the actual expenses required to fulfill the duties and expectations of the caucus in accordance with policies established by the executive committee or membership.

## ARTICLE SIX: DUTIES OF THE OFFICERS

**Section 1. Chair.** The chair is the chief executive officer of the caucus and shall supervise and control the affairs of the caucus and activities of the officers in accordance with this constitution and policies passed by the executive committee and/or general membership. The chair shall perform all duties incident to the office and such other duties as may be required by the laws of the

state of Minnesota, by this constitution or which may be prescribed, from time to time, by the executive committee. The chair shall preside at all meetings of the executive committee and the caucus and except as otherwise expressly provided by law, shall, in the name of the caucus, execute such deeds, mortgages, bonds, contracts, checks or other instruments which may from time to time be authorized by the executive committee or the membership.

**Section 2. Vice Chair.** In the absence of the chair, the vice chair of the caucus shall perform all the duties of the chair, and when so acting shall have all the powers of, and be subjected to all the restrictions on the chair. The vice chair shall have other powers and perform other such duties as may be prescribed by the laws of the State of Minnesota, by this constitution or which may be prescribed, from time to time by the chair, executive committee or membership.

**Section 3. Secretary.** The secretary shall take or supervise the recording and maintaining of minutes of all meetings of the membership and executive committee; ensure that all notices are duly given in accordance with this constitution; be the custodian of the records of the caucus; exhibit at all reasonable times to any member of the caucus, as prescribed by the constitution or policies of the executive committee, all records and documents of the caucus maintained by the secretary; and in general, perform or cause to be performed all duties incident to the office of the secretary and other such duties as may be required by the laws of the state of Minnesota, by this constitution or which may be prescribed, from time to time, by the chair or executive committee. The secretary shall maintain a calendar by which all groups, sub caucuses, and committees shall share notice of meetings.

**Section 4. Treasurer.** The treasurer shall: have charge and custody of, and be responsible for, all funds and securities of the caucus in such banks, trust companies, or other depositories as shall be selected and approved by the executive committee; receive and give receipt for money due and payable to the caucus from any source; disburse, or cause to be disbursed, the funds of the caucus as may be directed by the chair or executive committee; take proper vouchers for such disbursements; keep and maintain adequate and correct accounts of all the caucus properties and business transactions, including accounts of its assets, liabilities, receipts, disbursements, gains and losses; exhibit at all reasonable times the books of account and financial records to any member of the caucus, as may be prescribed by the executive committee; render to the chair or any member of the caucus, when requested, an account as prescribed by the executive committee,

of any or all of their transactions as treasurer and the financial condition of the caucus; prepare or cause to be prepared, and certify, or cause to be certified, any financial statements to be included in any required reports at all regular membership meetings of the caucus. In general, the treasurer shall perform all duties incident to the office of the treasurer and other such duties as may be required by the laws of the state of Minnesota, the laws of the government of the United States of America, by this constitution, or which may be prescribed, from time to time, by the executive committee.

**Section 5. Outreach Officer.** The outreach officer shall be responsible for outreach to underrepresented groups and geographies, and shall perform all other duties usually incident to the office of Outreach and Inclusion in the DFL party. The outreach officer's role, defined by the DFL constitution and bylaws, is of particular importance due to disproportionate numbers of historically underserved populations, those living in poverty, and those affected by poor environmental conditions both in urban and rural areas.

**Section 6. Communications Officer.** The communications officer shall manage caucus social media activities. The communications officer shall chair the communications committee and oversee all advertising, web presence, social media, publications, and meeting communications, including electronic resources, and may recruit such volunteers or paid staff as approved by the executive committee.

#### ARTICLE SEVEN: COMMITTEES

**Section 1. Committees.** The caucus may have any and all such committees as requested by the membership, chair or executive committee. The chair or executive committee may establish a committee to help meet the Environmental Caucus mission and purposes. Committees shall act in an advisory capacity to the chair, executive committee, and membership.

**Section 2. Minutes.** Each committee shall keep minutes or reports of its proceedings, and shall cause them to be filed with the caucus records maintained by the secretary.

**Section 3. Meetings and Actions of Committees.** The executive committee may adopt rules pertaining to the formation and conduct of committees.

**Section 4. Communications Committee.** The executive committee shall establish and the communications officer shall chair a communications committee to address the communication issues and needs of the caucus. The committee shall include the communications officer, secretary, and such members as the executive committee deems appropriate,

including persons assisting with social media or websites or generating print media. The communications committee shall identify policies to oversee advertising, web presence, use of technology and social media, and publications for approval by the executive committee. The committee may recruit volunteers; paid staff may be recruited as approved by the executive committee.

**Section 5. Legislative Committee.** The executive committee shall establish a legislative committee and the caucus chair shall annually nominate a legislative director for executive committee approval. The director shall chair the committee. The director shall work through the committee to develop and carry out a plan to communicate the interests of the caucus and otherwise influence legislation each session. The director and committee shall strive to hold a lobby day at the State Capital annually in conjunction with the executive committee.

#### ARTICLE EIGHT: ENDORSEMENT

The Environmental Caucus may endorse or otherwise offer written support to candidates for office both within the DFL and in local, state, and national elections. While the caucus may issue more than one letter of affirmation for candidates in a contested election, it may make only one endorsement per office, and an endorsement immediately nullifies any letters of affirmation for the same office.

The executive committee may approve one or more annual endorsement committees or subcommittees. Such committees and subcommittees must propose a screening process for their assigned elections and submit that process to the executive committee for approval prior to contacting any candidates. Following screening process approval, an endorsement committee or subcommittee will screen and submit the names of recommended candidates to the executive committee for ratification. An endorsement committee or subcommittee must approve endorsement or letter of affirmation recommendation by at least 60% of a quorum of its members. An endorsement or letter of affirmation is valid as long as that candidate is not opposing a candidate endorsed by the DFL. A candidate must be formally endorsed to receive donations of funds or other support from the DFL Environmental Caucus.

To consider endorsing candidates in local elections, interested caucus members must propose a screening process which includes caucus members from within the election boundary. The proposed local election screening process must be

ratified by the executive committee prior to formation of the endorsement subcommittee. The executive committee may set and periodically update minimum standards for endorsement processes.

#### **ARTICLE NINE: EXECUTION OF INSTRUMENTS, DEPOSITS AND FUNDS**

**Section 1. Execution of Instruments.** The executive committee, except as otherwise provided in this constitution, may by resolution authorize any officer or agent of the caucus to enter into any contract or execute and deliver any instrument in the name of and on behalf of the caucus, and such authority may be general or confined to specific instances. Unless so authorized, no officer, agent or employee shall have the power or authority to bind the caucus by any contract or engagement or to pledge its credit or to render it liable monetarily for any purpose or in any amount.

**Section 2. Checks and Notes.** Except as otherwise specifically determined by resolution of the executive committee, or as otherwise required by law; checks, drafts, promissory notes, orders for the payment of money, and other evidence of indebtedness of the caucus shall be signed by the treasurer.

**Section 3. Deposits.** All funds of the caucus shall be deposited in a timely manner to the credit of the caucus in such banks, trust companies, or other depositories as the executive committee shall select. Funds held within the caucus may be designated by the executive committee to activities that support the caucus mission

**Section 4. Gifts.** The executive committee may accept, on behalf of the caucus, any contribution, gift, bequest or devise for the purposes and benefit of this caucus, however the caucus will not accept gifts, contribution, bequest or devise from any entity that would create an appearance of conflict of interest.

**Section 5. Disposition of Party Records.** Upon leaving office, officers shall turn over all caucus records, books, and properties to their successors.

#### **ARTICLE TEN: ASSETS OF THE CAUCUS**

**Section 1. Prohibition Against Private Inurement.** No part of the net earnings of this caucus shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributed to, its officers, members, agents or other private persons, except that the caucus shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes of this caucus and in accordance with this constitution and the policies of the caucus.

**Section 2. Distribution of Assets.** Upon the dissolution of this caucus, its assets remaining after

payment, or provision for payment, of all debts and liabilities of this caucus shall be distributed to the Minnesota DFL.

#### **ARTICLE ELEVEN: AMENDMENTS TO THIS CONSTITUTION**

**Section 1.** Except as may be otherwise specified by the constitution of the Minnesota DFL and the laws of the state of Minnesota, the membership of the caucus shall have the power to amend, alter, or repeal any or all sections of this constitution or to adopt a new constitution upon approval of 60% of the members in good standing present at the annual meeting. A quorum of 20% of members in good standing is required to consider amendments to this constitution or to consider a new constitution.

**Section 2.** Such proposed amendments, alterations or motions to repeal shall be submitted to the secretary either by a constitution committee authorized by the executive committee and appointed by the chair, or in writing signed by no less than 15 members of the caucus or a majority of the executive committee members. The secretary shall coordinate with the chair to submit any changes proposed by a constitution committee directly to the annual meeting for its consideration. The executive committee shall review and the caucus shall consider other submissions on proposals received within 60 days of a meeting.

**Section 3.** Once an amendment or repeal, other than those in a constitution committee report, has received a review and positive recommendation of the executive committee, it will be added to the agenda of the annual meeting for a vote by the general membership.

#### **ARTICLE TWELVE: NOTICE**

Each member is responsible for ensuring that the caucus receives their current postal address, cell phone, and email address, and shall update any changes in their respective email addresses in a timely manner. **In the interest of environmental and economic conservation, all caucus members are strongly encouraged to opt in to receive caucus notices via email.**

#### **ARTICLE THIRTEEN: CONSTRUCTION AND TERMS**

**Section 1. DFL Constitution prevails** when there is any conflict between the provisions of this constitution and the constitution of the DFL, the provisions of the constitution of the DFL shall govern. Should any of the provisions or portions of this Environmental Caucus constitution be held unenforceable or invalid for any reason, the remaining provisions and portions shall be unaffected by such holding.

**Section 2. Parliamentary Authority.**

Parliamentary matters neither governed by this constitution, nor by the rules of the body in question, nor by the constitution and bylaws of the DFL, nor by the Official Call, shall be governed by

the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*.