

DFL SENIOR CAUCUS CHARTER

Draft May 2024

Article I. NAME

This Charter is adopted in order to create the Minnesota DFL Senior Caucus, herein the Caucus, which is a caucus of the Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party of Minnesota, referred to herein as the DFL Party.

Article II. PURPOSES, POWERS AND GOVERNANCE

Section 1. PURPOSES:

The primary purpose of the Minnesota DFL Senior Caucus is to bring outreach, focus and promotion to senior issues

Additional Purposes are: 1) to foster the involvement of Minnesota seniors, especially those persons 55 years of age and older, in the political process; 2) to encourage their active participation in the DFL Party; 3) to promote involvement and representation in government at all levels, 4) to promote, support, and hold accountable DFL candidates at all levels who are aware of and committed to the concerns of Minnesota seniors; 5) to increase voter turnout among Minnesota seniors; and 6) to ensure appropriate senior representation in party positions in the DFL Party.

The Caucus shall be operated exclusively for political and educational purposes. It shall be subject to the Constitution and Bylaws and the ongoing platform of the DFL Party. It shall not support or spend money in support of any candidate who is running against a DFL-endorsed candidate.

Section 2. POWERS: The Caucus shall possess and exercise only such powers as required to carry out the foregoing purposes, and these powers must be consistent with Minnesota Law and the DFL Party's Constitution and Bylaws.

Section 3. GOVERNANCE: The annual membership meeting shall constitute the supreme governing body of the Caucus. The Caucus shall be governed by the Board between annual membership meetings.

The current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the Caucus in all cases in which such rules are not in conflict with this Charter or the Constitution and Bylaws of the Minnesota DFL Party.

Section 4. The DFL Senior Caucus chair and all members of the board and all committees and commissions and all chapters and meetings at every level shall foster and encourage a culture of engagement, civility, safety, and inclusion among all individuals participating in official caucus activities. This article shall not be used to prevent free discussion of issues at any DFL Senior Caucus activity.

Article III. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. ELIGIBILITY: Membership is open to all Minnesota seniors who support the purposes and principles of the Caucus, who consider themselves Democrats, and who agree with principles of the DFL Party, its Constitution and Bylaws, and the DFL Senior Caucus Charter.

Section 2. Active MEMBERS ~~IN GOOD STANDING~~: Those wishing to join shall submit a membership form to the DFL Senior Caucus. All members are encouraged to serve within a chapter and/or on at least one Caucus committee.

An Active member ~~in good standing~~ is anyone who is eligible and who submits a membership form annually or when their contact information changes. Only Active Members may vote at the annual meeting or any other membership meetings.

There are no dues for the DFL Senior Caucus. Any donations to the DFL Senior Caucus are voluntary and welcome

Section 3. ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING: Each Spring an annual membership meeting shall be held to formulate policies and goals, to set an agenda for the coming

year, to review financial and other reports, and, on odd numbered years, to elect Principal Officers and Board members.

Section 4. CALL TO ANNUAL MEETING: The notice of the annual membership meeting shall be mailed and/or emailed out at least fourteen (14) days in advance of the meeting. Nominations for Principal Officers and Directors in odd numbered years and specific questions to be decided by the members shall be included in the call notice.

Section 5. SPECIAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS: Other membership meetings may be held from time to time. Such special membership meetings may be called by the Caucus Chair with the consent of three (3) Board Members, by a majority of the Board of Directors, or by a petition signed by ten percent (10%) of the Caucus's active members. ~~who are in good standing.~~

Section 6. PROPER NOTICE: The notice of a meeting requiring a membership action vote shall be mailed and/or emailed out at least fourteen (14) days in advance of the meeting. Specific questions to be decided by the members shall be submitted to the members in the notice of the meeting.

Section 7. BALLOTING: Election of Principal Officers and Directors may be done by written ballot distributed at the Annual Membership Meeting. If five (5) members request a secret ballot it shall be offered.

Section 8. MEMBER QUORUMS: The Annual Meeting of the DFL Senior Caucus is considered a convention under the rules of the DFL Party and will require a majority of those registered members who are in attendance as the meeting is called to order. For all other meetings the quorum will be 20% of the bodies membership, either in person or via technology, unless specified differently within this charter.

Section 9. BYLAWS: By majority vote, the membership may authorize the draft and adoption of bylaws for the Caucus. All adopted bylaws shall be subordinate to the Caucus Charter.

Article IV. PRINCIPAL OFFICERS

Section 1. PRINCIPAL OFFICERS: The Principal Officers of the Board (Officers) shall consist of the Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Director, Outreach and Inclusion Officer and Voting Director to the State Executive Committee. The Vice Chair shall be not of the same gender from the Chair. The board has the authority to combine the Membership Director and the Outreach and Inclusion Officer. The membership has the authority to establish a second vice chair if they believe that is reasonable and prudent. If so, that the second vice chair shall also be a member of the Executive Committee.

Section 2. RESPONSIBILITIES OF PRINCIPAL OFFICERS:

- (i) The Chair shall convene and facilitate all Caucus and Board meetings; shall exercise oversight over the operation of the Caucus, the Board, and such committees that the Board may establish; and administer the directives of the Caucus. The Chair may delegate duties as necessary.
- (ii) The Vice Chair shall fulfill the duties of the Chair in the absence of the Chair and shall assist the Chair in the duties of the Chair.
- (iii) The Secretary shall produce the official records of the meetings, distribute calls and notices for Board or membership meetings, and distribute other Caucus communications as may be deemed necessary.
- (iv) The Treasurer shall keep record of, account for, and report on the financial activities of the Caucus.
- (v) The Membership Director shall focus on increasing general membership across the state and coordinate the recruitment of members, manage membership data, maintain up-to-date membership records and provide timely reporting of such records, and determine those active members ~~who are in good~~

~~standing~~.-The Membership Director may be designated as the Outreach and Inclusion Officer for the Caucus by the board.

(vi) Should the DFL Senior Caucus be entitled to a Voting Director to the State Executive Committee under the provisions of Article VIII of the Constitution and Bylaws of the Minnesota Democratic Farmer Labor Party, the Voting Director shall represent the expressed interests of the Caucus on the State Executive Committee and shall report to the Caucus on actions of interest by the state party. A person who is otherwise a Principal Officer of the Caucus is not prohibited from holding this position.

Section 3. POWERS OF PRINCIPAL OFFICERS: Pursuant to a written resolution of the Board, any two (2) Principal Officers may execute contracts and agreements on behalf of the Caucus.

Section 4. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: The Principal Officers of the Board, the Chair of the Technology Committee and the immediate past Chair and Vice Chair shall constitute the Executive Committee of the Caucus which will govern the business of the Caucus between Board meetings.

ARTICLE V. THE BOARD

Section 1. MEMBERSHIP OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS: The Board of Directors (the Board) shall consist of the Caucus Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Director, and at least eight (8) at-large Directors as elected by a majority of members in good standing at an odd numbered year's annual membership meeting. The Board shall also have the authority to appoint five (5) additional at-large Directors to serve for the same time period as the above Directors. [The elected and appointed Directors must achieve equal division by gender identity.](#) The membership shall strive for ~~gender and~~ geographic balance in the election of Directors. All Officers and Directors shall be elected to serve a two (2) year term.

Section 2. DUTIES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS: The management and direction of the business and affairs of the Caucus shall be vested in the Board. Its duties shall include:

- (i) Calling, scheduling and conducting membership meetings, disseminating proper notice, and determining voting methods.
- (ii) (ii) Authorizing and organizing candidate forums and screening, accountability and review sessions, speaker events, and similar activities.
- (iii) Conducting the financial affairs of the Caucus, including approval of expenditures.
- (iv) Raising funds to support the activities of the Caucus;
- (v) Overseeing the work of volunteers, any paid staff, Officers, and others carrying out the work of the Caucus.
- (vi) Appointing any committees or commissions needed to carry out the activities of the Caucus.
- (vii) Authorizing official statements of support for candidates, legislation or for policy at any level of government.
- (viii) Designating titled Directors to meet the needs of the organization.
- (ix) Appointing committee of members to work on specific purposes and projects and/or commissions of both members and non-member experts to accomplish specific tasks for the Board and/or to make recommendations back to the Board or take action specifically prescribed to it by the Board. Any decision made by these committees or commissions shall report the same back to the Board and be entered into the official minutes of the Board.
- (x). Conducting an annual internal audit of DFL Senior Caucus financial records.

Section 3. POWERS: The Board shall approve and authorize expenditures and payment of encumbrances.

Section 4. BOARD QUORUM AND MEETINGS: A quorum of the Board shall be twenty-five percent (25%), but not less than Nine (9) members of the members serving at the current time. The Board shall meet quarterly and at other times as called by the Chair or by any two (2) members of the board.

ARTICLE VI. BOARD RESIGNATION, REMOVAL, AND VACANCY

Section 1. RESIGNATION: Any Officers or Directors may resign by giving written notice to the Chair or the Secretary.

Section 2. REMOVAL OF OFFICER OR DIRECTOR:

- a. Removal of a Principal Officer or Director : Any Principal Officer, including the Chair, or Director may be removed from office by a majority vote of the Board. A removed Officer remains a Director unless removed in accordance with item b below.
- b. Removal for Absence:
 - i) A Principal Officer or Director who establishes a pattern of unexcused absences may be removed by the two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) vote of the Board.
 - ii) Notification shall be sent to the affected Officer or Director.
- c. Removal for Wrong Doing: Any Principal Officer or Director may be removed for malfeasance or nonfeasance at a special noticed membership meeting by a two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) vote of the quorum. The removal of an Officer or Director shall not be considered unless:
 - (i) That agenda item has been included in the notice of the meeting;

(ii) The Officer or Director in question was given at least fourteen (14) days notice of such meeting and vote; and

(iii) The Officer or Director is given a reasonable opportunity to make a presentation to the membership.

Section 3. VACANCIES: Any vacancy in the Board caused by death, resignation, or by any other cause shall be filled by a vote of the remaining Directors, and each Director so chosen shall hold office until the next odd-numbered year annual membership meeting.

ARTICLE VII. NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS PROCESS FOR STATEWIDE CAUCUS OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

Section 1. THE SEARCH COMMITTEE: Prior to each odd-numbered annual meeting the Board shall designate a Search Committee to advertise to the membership the Officer and Board positions to be voted on at that annual meeting. The Committee may compile a list of those members in good standing who wish to be a candidate for one of the positions, as well as which position for which they wish to run. The list of candidates shall then be put before the members at the annual meeting and voted upon.

Section 3. OTHER NOMINATIONS: Other nominations and nominations from the floor shall be accepted provided the consent of the nominee has been secured prior to the annual membership meeting and provided the nominee is an active member ~~in good standing~~ of the Caucus.

ARTICLE VIII. CHAPTERS

Section 1. SUBORDINATE CHAPTERS: Caucus members residing within a particular Minnesota U.S. Congressional District, or smaller geographic unit, are encouraged to organize and operate a Chapter of the Caucus in that district in order to further the purposes and activities of the Caucus. Caucus members seeking to form such a Chapter must agree to operate under the Caucus Charter and must apply to the Board for recognition as an official Chapter. Chapters must elect a chair who is an active member ~~in~~

~~good-standing~~ and who will represent the chapter as a member of the Board. Chapters must semiannually report their activities to the Board and semi-annually report financial activity to the Caucus Treasurer each June and January.

ARTICLE IX. ENDORSEMENT PROCESS

Section 1. COMMUNITY CAUCUS STATUS. The Senior Caucus shall not endorse unless it had attained the status of “Community Caucus” under the State DFL Constitution and Bylaws

Section ~~1.~~ 2 STATEWIDE CANDIDATES: A sixty percent (60%) affirmative vote of the active members ~~in good-standing~~ present and voting at a properly noticed membership meeting is required for Caucus endorsement of a statewide candidate.

Section ~~2~~ 3. CHAPTER RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ENDORSEMENT OF OTHER CANDIDATES: ~~Endorsements~~ Chapter recommendations for endorsements of other candidates shall be made at a properly noticed meeting of active members ~~in good standing~~ of the subordinate Chapter that contains the election district in question. If no subordinate Chapter exists, the Board may call special meetings for the purpose of screening and ~~endorsing~~ recommendation of candidates for endorsement in such local races.

Section ~~3.~~ 4 ~~CERTIFICATION OF~~ DFL SENIOR CAUCUS BOARD APPROVAL OF CHAPTER RECOMMENDATION FOR ENDORSEMENT: Results of screening and ~~endorsements~~ recommendation for endorsement by Chapters shall be submitted to the Board for ~~certification.~~ consideration. In a case where the outcome of a Caucus endorsement process is disputed, such a dispute shall be resolved by the Board.

Section ~~4~~ 5 SUPERIORITY OF DFL PARTY ENDORSEMENT: An endorsement of a candidate by the DFL Party, or its properly authorized local units, shall preempt any conflicting endorsements of or public support by the Caucus, or its Chapters. The Caucus need not necessarily endorse a candidate, who has obtained a DFL Party endorsement, but the Caucus shall not endorse or support a candidate who is running in opposition to a

DFL endorsed candidate. In the event that an endorsing convention or commission adjourns with no endorsement or takes an affirmative vote to not endorse, the caucus must immediately cease providing support, including formal endorsement and letters of support, to candidates in that race.

ARTICLE X. PUBLIC STATEMENT - FORMULATION AND APPROVAL

The Board may make a public statement on behalf of the Caucus provided that:

- a). The matter shall be presented at a duly noticed meeting of the Caucus membership by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board. There shall be an opportunity for both sides of the issue to be presented to the membership. An affirmative vote of sixty percent (60%) of the quorum shall be required for approval.
- b.) When time constraints exist, the Board shall approve the action to be taken by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board members.
- c) No Chapter may make a public statement without prior Board approval.
- d) The Senior Caucus will not take a public position contrary to the DFL Ongoing Platform and Action Agenda. The Senior Caucus may, however, advocate for changes within the DFL party, and encourage people to bring resolutions to the precinct caucuses.

Article XI. AMENDMENTS TO CHARTER

Section 1. PROPOSAL AND REVIEW: Amendments to the Charter may be proposed by any active member. ~~in good standing~~. No vote shall be held for any amendment proposed by the Board unless a copy of the amendment is included in a properly noticed membership meeting.

Section 2. ADOPTION OF AMENDMENTS: Amendments to the Charter must be approved by sixty percent (60%) of a quorum of active members ~~in good standing~~ at a properly noticed membership meeting.

Section 3 APPROVAL BY THE STATE DFL: Amendments to this charter or the by-laws must be approved by the DFL State Central Committee or the State DFL Constitution, By-Laws, and Rules Committee.

Article XII. DISSOLUTION AND REVOCATION OF CHARTER

Section 1. CAUCUS DISSOLUTION: The Caucus may only be dissolved with the approval of at least sixty percent (60%) of the Caucus active members. ~~in good standing.~~ Ballots shall be counted thirty (30) days after the mailing of the ballots. Upon dissolution and after payment of all liabilities, all remaining assets shall revert to the DFL Party.

Section 2. CHAPTER DISSOLUTION: A Chapter may only be dissolved with the approval of at least sixty percent (60%) of its active members ~~in good standing.~~ Ballots shall be counted thirty (30) days after the mailing of the ballots. Upon dissolution of a Chapter and the payment of its remaining liabilities, the remaining assets shall revert to the Caucus.

Section 3. REVOCATION OF CHAPTER CHARTER: The Board may, with cause, terminate a subordinate Chapter by a sixty percent (60%) vote. Causes for such termination may include violations of fiduciary responsibility or acts contrary to the Caucus charter, purposes and positions. In the event of termination, all assets of the terminated unit shall revert to the control and possession of the Caucus.

Article XIII. NO PERSONAL LIABILITY; FISCAL YEAR

Section 1. PERSONAL LIABILITY: The officers, directors, and members of this Caucus shall not be personally liable to any extent whatsoever for any debts or obligations of this association.

Section 2. FISCAL YEAR: The Caucus' fiscal year is the calendar year, ending December 31.

Article XIV. DATE AND METHOD TO PUT CHARTER INTO FORCE

This Charter shall be in force upon its adoption by sixty percent (60%) of the members present at the first annual membership meeting of the Caucus.

Revisions:

- a) Version 1.0 of this Charter was approved by unanimous vote of members at first annual membership meeting, May 19th, 2007.
- b) Version 1.1 of this Charter was approved by vote of members at third annual membership meeting, May 30th, 2009, and supersedes all earlier versions.
- c) Version 1.2 of this Charter was approved by vote of members at fourth annual membership meeting, June 12th, 2010, and supersedes all earlier versions.
- d) Version 1.3 of this Charter was approved by vote of members at sixth annual membership meeting, June 23rd, 2012, and supersedes all earlier versions.
- e) Version 1.4 of this Charter was approved by vote of members at seventh annual membership meeting, May 18th, 2013, and supersedes all earlier versions.
- f) Version 1.5 of this Charter was approved by vote of members at eleventh annual membership meeting, May 20th, 2017, and supersedes all earlier versions.
- g) Version 1.6 of this Charter was approved by vote of members at thirteenth annual membership meeting, May 19th, 2019, and supersedes all earlier versions.
- h) Version 1.7 of this Charter was approved by vote of members at fourteenth annual membership meeting, December 10th, 2020, and supersedes all earlier versions.
- i) Version 1.8 of this Charter was approved by vote of members at the fifteenth annual membership meeting, September 11th, 2021, and subject to approval by the DFL Constitution, Bylaws, and Rules Committee, and supersedes all earlier versions.
- j) Version 1.9 of this charter was approved by a vote of the membership at the sixteenth annual meeting and supersedes all earlier versions and was submitted and approved by the state DFL constitution and by-laws committee, January 2023
- k) Version 1.10 awaiting board approval, annual meeting approval and approval by the DFL constitution and bylaw committee. May 2024