

Matt Ehling
Chair, Legislative Issues Committee
Minnesota Coalition on Government Information

July 7, 2014

Legislative Commission on Data Practices

Dear Senators and Representatives,

I am writing on behalf of the Minnesota Coalition on Government Information (MNCOGI), an all-volunteer non-profit organization dedicated to encouraging government transparency and public access to information. MNCOGI regularly makes public comments regarding matters of information policy, and advocated for the creation of a Legislative Commission on Data Practices during the 2014 legislative session.

MNCOGI believes that the commission can make important contributions to the creation of data policy in Minnesota in the following ways:

1. The commission can provide a venue for conducting research into emerging data-related issues before bills are introduced;
2. The commission can help to evaluate and improve existing bills that deal with matters of data policy.

The just-completed session addressed many data policy issues that require further research and resolution - including the status of certain HMO data relating to public health care programs, reporting requirements for police use of unmanned aerial vehicles, and license plate recognition technology.

MNCOGI's members (including librarians, attorneys, IT professionals, academics, journalists, and others) stand ready to answer questions and provide feedback on these and other data-related matters. Members of our legislative issues committee also plan to appear before the commission to offer perspectives on pending issues.

We look forward to working with the commission, as well as with other key stakeholders (including IPAD staff and others) to preserve and enhance Minnesota's long tradition of government openness, public oversight, and institutional accountability.

Sincerely,

/s/ Matt Ehling
Matt Ehling

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