

MEP Collaborative Priorities 2021

Building forward at the scale and timeline our communities need.

Climate Change • Racial Justice • Economic Recovery

Facilitating: A Transformed Narrative and Shared Messaging

[We know that the “soil” that surrounds us must be prepared to receive the seeds of our ideas and allow them to grow.](#) This means changing dominant narratives that have perpetuated a destructive status quo. To do this, the MEP coalition will lead proactive and defensive message development and campaigns that are both public facing and behind-the-scenes, including:

- Holding state leaders and legislators accountable for real climate progress.
- Applying science and law in agency decision-making to meet their mission.
- Ensuring environmental and racial justice is centered in policy solutions and appropriations.

Co-Leading: Areas of Significant Engagement

Fighting for a healthy climate. We know that our climate affects everything. That is why, in 2019, the MEP Coalition adopted the climate crisis as the most critical issue to tackle for collective progress. In addition to supporting numerous legislative proposals, including the House Climate Action Caucus Framework, that address the climate crisis across several sectors, MEP staff will devote significant resources to:

- Investing in natural carbon solutions: forests, prairies, and regenerative agriculture practices.
- Incorporating climate impacts and resiliency into environmental review and permitting.
- Building Climate Impacts Analysis into bonding proposals and state appropriations.
- Advocating against the Enbridge Line 3 tar sands pipeline.

People and planet-centered public institutions. Our public institutions were created to serve people and our environment – but that is not being honored. Instead, public institutions too often treat industry like their primary clients, ignoring science and the good of people and the clean water, air, and lands that sustain life. MEP will facilitate development of an action plan to tackle this foundational issue.

Getting the lead out. Since the 1970s, we have known lead exposure to be a threat to public health and wildlife. Yet, the unnecessary presence of lead continues to impact the wellbeing of Minnesotans despite practical solutions. Lead exposure disproportionately impacts Black, brown, and Indigenous Minnesotans, children, people with disabilities, and people with low incomes. Getting the lead out is crucial to advancing justice for all people. In addition to supporting legislation to ban lead fishing tackle and lead ammunition, MEP staff will work with partners to:

- Identify and bring awareness to lead levels in drinking water and the environment.
- Develop a plan to replace 100,000+ lead drinking water service lines across Minnesota.

Coordinating: Defense to protect our Environment

We must defend our bedrock laws, rules and funding that protect our people and planet. As a coalition, MEP is positioned to help coordinate defense strategies and tactics, protecting, for example

- Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund allocations for 2020 and 2021
- Clean Water Land and Legacy appropriations.
- 2021/2022 state budget appropriations.
- Free speech, especially in the face of Line 3.
- Water quality standards.

Supporting: Legislative Policy Portfolio for a Just Transition – Session 2021

MEP organizations, allied decision-makers, and others will be advancing dozens of good bills that tackle the climate crisis, racial injustice, economic injustice for all Minnesotans, including new revenue sources to meet the needs of our communities across the state. The MEP coalition will support a growing, dynamic slate of proactive legislation with sign-on letters, action alerts, and other services. So far, this includes:

Energy

- Moving the state to 100% clean electricity production as fast as possible. (100% Campaign and partners)
- Allowing utilities to encourage “fuel-switching” and increasing CIP energy efficiency savings goals. *ECO Act: Energy Conservation & Optimization* (CE&E, Fresh Energy)
- Updating MN’s 2007 emissions reduction goals and benchmarks to meet needs outlined by current science. *Next Generation Energy Act Revision* (MN Center for Environmental Advocacy)
- Promoting the House Climate Action Caucus bills to reduce greenhouse gases across our economy.
- Requiring MPCA to evaluate cumulative impacts on communities that will be impacted by a project seeking a permit. *MN Frontline Communities Protection Act, also known as Cumulative Impacts Bill* (COPAL, Community Members for Environmental Justice)

Transportation

- Passing a funding mechanism to build-out and support a first-class Bus Rapid Transit and auxiliary transit system over the next 10 years. (Move Minnesota, Sierra Club)
- Increasing the dedicated portion of flexible federal funds to support active transportation and enacting other dedicated funding for transit, biking and walking. *Omnibus Active Transportation Improvements Bill* (Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota)

Agriculture

- Incentivizing 100% Soil-Healthy Farming (Land Stewardship Project)
- Fully funding Forever Green (\$10 million) through General Fund and Clean Water Fund appropriations (Friends of the Mississippi River)
- Enacting a moratorium on mega-dairies (over 1000 animal units) (Land Stewardship Project)
- Expanding local and regional food markets and processing facilities (Land Stewardship Project)

Waste

- Enabling repair of electronics by local professionals who might otherwise be blocked from proprietary software information -- from phones to tractors. *Right to Repair* (Environment Minnesota)
- Requiring the accuracy of labels on compostable products to protect the quality of compost (Minnesota Composting Council -- Eureka Recycling, MEP member)

Water, Lands and Wildlife

- Requiring that industry show a successful example of a copper nickel sulfide mine that has operated for 10 years and been closed for 10 years without polluting before building such a mine in Minnesota. *Prove it First* (Friends of Boundary Water Wilderness)
- Enacting a ban on sulfide-ore copper mining on state lands and prohibiting the issuance of state permits, licenses or leases anywhere within the Rainy River Headwaters. *Boundary Waters Permanent Protection Bill* (Northeastern Minnesotans for Wilderness)
- Repealing an exemption to MN Endangered Species Law (Friends of MN Scientific and Natural Areas)
- Banning lead fishing tackle and ammunition (Friends of MN Scientific and Natural Areas)
- Requiring water testing at time of property sale (MN Well Owners Organization)

Pollinators

- Reversing a state pesticide preemption rule to give local communities more control over pesticide use on public and private property. (Pollinator Friendly Alliance)
- Providing state incentives to farmers to voluntarily transition from neonicotinoid-treated corn or soybean seed to neonic-free seed. (Pollinator Friendly Alliance)
- Labeling and regulating insecticide-treated seed as a pesticide (Pollinator Friendly Alliance)
- Prohibiting use of neonicotinoid insecticides in more protected wildlife areas including parks (local, regional, state), state forest land, aquatic management areas, DNR scientific and nature areas, nature preserves and wildlife management areas. (Pollinator Friendly Alliance)
- Increasing through state incentives pesticide-free habitat corridors in urban and rural communities on public and private lands including public building property, residential yards, schools, parks, and campuses. (Pollinator Friendly Alliance)

*Is your MEP member organization championing legislation that isn't on this list?
This is a dynamic document. Contact Sara Wolff at sara@mepartnership.org*

