

February 19, 2004

The Honorable Barb Sykora
403 State Office Building
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear Representative Sykora,

Last September, the Minnesota Governor's Council on Geographic Information passed a resolution endorsing the geography components of the draft social studies standard. The Council was especially pleased by the draft's strong commitment to geography education and the use of technology, notably geographic information technology (GIS).

Though the standard has now gone through several revisions, we are pleased that a geography requirement has been retained, but the Council is concerned that the proposed full year of geography education may be reduced to one-half year. We encourage you and your members to retain the original emphasis on geography and the use of GIS contained in the initial draft.

The proposed geography standards were developed by a group of geographic educators, including Dr. David Lanegran, Professor of Geography at Macalester College, who brought the draft provisions to the Council for review. Following an extensive discussion with Dr. Lanegran, the Council formally adopted its support resolution. A copy of the letter of support sent to Education Commissioner Yecke is attached.

You may contact me at (612) 676-3950 if you would like more information about the Council endorsement. Dr. Lanegran can provide details about the content of the standard. He can be reached at (651) 696-6504.

Respectfully,

Larry Charboneau, Chair
Governor's Council on Geographic Information