

January 22, 2025

Representative Heintzeman
Environment and Natural Resources Finance and Policy Committee
Room G3, Minnesota Capitol

Dear Members of the House Environment and Natural Resources Finance and Policy Committee:

On behalf of the ten producer members and dozens of vendor members of the Minnesota Bio-Fuels Association (MBA), I write in strong support of efforts to improve the environmental permitting process in Minnesota.

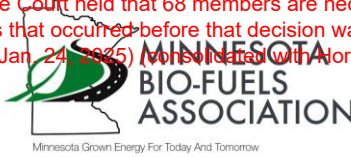
The ethanol industry in Minnesota helps support farmers, rural communities, and our state's economy through the production of low-carbon transportation fuel and animal feed from Minnesota-grown feedstocks. While this established business model is creating significant value, MBA members continue to innovate with new technologies and production processes that will create additional opportunities for investment and job creation in rural communities, as well as for new uses of ethanol and co-products like corn oil for SAF.

MBA members want to do even more to contribute to the state's economic and environmental goals, but lengthy delays in obtaining permits to build, expand, and operate their facilities have hampered these efforts. If Minnesota is going to meet its clean energy goals, become a hub for SAF, capitalize on federal tax credits, and remain competitive for business investment, the state must make a good-faith effort to issue environmental permits in a more efficient way.

The legislature made progress on permitting efficiency last year when it made numerous improvements to the permitting process for new renewable energy projects. Expanding on those efforts by making the permitting process through the Pollution Control Agency (PCA) more efficient, certain, and timely will allow ethanol plants across the state to fully capitalize on these new market opportunities, provide more flexibility and commodity demand for farmers, and remain competitive for business and capital investment with surrounding states.

To be clear, we do not support loosening federal or state environmental standards. Providing a more consistent and efficient permitting process is not incompatible with protecting our state's natural resources and environment. In fact, permitting efficiency will promote better environmental outcomes by allowing ethanol facilities to more quickly adopt the latest technologies that increase yield, lower carbon intensity scores, reduce particulate matter, and improve energy and electrical efficiency.

Permitting efficiency should not be a partisan issue, and we strongly urge both parties to actively engage in these efforts. Lasting and meaningful improvements to permitting efficiency will require bipartisan discussion and cooperation.



The members of MBA appreciate the Environment and Natural Resources Committee's consideration of this topic and look forward to continuing to engage with lawmakers from both parties this session to achieve our collective goal of a stronger economy and healthier environment in Minnesota.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Brian Werner".

Brian Werner
Executive Director
Minnesota Bio-Fuels Association