

Moriarty
3261 Victoria St.
Shoreview, MN 55126

January 30, 2023

Dear Committee on Environment, Climate, and Legacy:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony on behalf of Senate File 612 to eliminate commercial turtle harvesting.

I have been involved with turtle conservation and research in Minnesota for 35 years. I have seen turtle populations decrease at a number of the sites where I have worked. I have worked with all the species found in Minnesota.

Turtle populations in Minnesota, the US, and the world have been under threat from habitat loss, pollution, and human use. Commercial harvest, especially of Snapping Turtles, targets adult females. The females are crucial for the maintenance and recovery of the turtle populations.

The initial efforts to eliminate commercial turtle harvest started 20 years ago with elimination of new turtle harvester licenses but allowed existing trappers to annually renew their licenses. It has been a long process to get Minnesota's turtles protected. I am looking forward to seeing commercial harvesting finally coming to an end.

Sincerely,



John Moriarty

Conservation Biologist

Author of *Amphibians and Reptiles in Minnesota*