



**CONSERVATION
MINNESOTA**

April 18, 2023

RE: SF 2438 (Hawj) – Environment & Climate Omnibus Bill
To: Chair Marty and Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

On behalf of the members of Conservation Minnesota located in all of Minnesota’s 87 counties, we write to express our strong support for SF 2438 (Hawj).

This comprehensive bill invests in the people and the places that will make Minnesota a leader in cleaning up air pollution, protecting and restoring our water resources, forests, and grasslands, and ensuring everyone in Minnesota has a place to enjoy our Great Outdoors. While we support many aspects of this wide-ranging bill, we would like to highlight our support for three specific sections, and respectfully ask members to consider adding one more item that was not included in the Omnibus.

This Omnibus puts Minnesota on a path to be a national leader by preventing PFAS contamination before it even starts. Many testifiers have noted that PFAS became popular across the globe in the 20th century because of products developed in Minnesota. This bill will take us fully into the 21st century by making Minnesota a leader in ensuring that all but the most essential products will be free from unnecessary PFAS.

It is great to see that the bill statutorily establishes the wildly successful “Lawns to Legumes” program. We know Minnesotans in every corner of the state are interested in doing more to help pollinator populations.

The new Water Safety Program and Operators Permit will make Minnesota’s lakes and rivers safer for boaters, paddlers and everyone who enjoys the water in the Land of 10,000 Lakes.

Finally, we respectfully encourage Chair Hawj to include funding for the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa to restore elk on state and tribal lands. We know that elk once roamed most of Minnesota, and expanding the herd beyond the far northwest corner of the state will fulfill a years-long goal of the Band. SF1573 (Kunesh) would be a great addition to the Omnibus.

Thanks for the opportunity to express our suggestions and support for SF2438.

Sincerely,

Nels Paulsen, Policy Director (608) 469-5299
David Pelikan, Policy Associate (262) 685-7265

nels@conservationminnesota.org
david@conservationminnesota.org