



March 13, 2024

Chair Fong Hawj  
MN Senate Environment, Climate, and Legacy  
1150 Minnesota Senate Building  
95 University Ave W.  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Re: Support of SF 4898 – Support for Native Fish Bill

Dear Chair Sen Hawj and Committee Members,

I am writing in strong support of SF 4898. As an aquatic ecologist specializing in native rough fish (e.g. gars, bowfins, suckers) for over 20 years, with research spanning the Great Lakes region to the Gulf Coast of Louisiana, I recognize the positive value and high-impact that SF 4898 will have on Minnesotans, and more broadly on freshwater biodiversity as a whole.

Protecting our native biodiversity is an integral component of natural resource management and can help reinforce the resilience of our freshwater ecosystems in the face of invasive species, habitat loss, and climate change (threats that indeed have severe negative economic impacts and must be addressed with urgency).

Game fish species (e.g. walleye, bass) already receive important protections, including harvest limits, however, they represent only a small fraction of our Minnesota native species diversity. Native “rough fish” make up a significantly larger proportion of our native biodiversity, yet most of these species receive little to no protection by way of harvest limits. SF 4898 facilitates much-needed protections for these species, and lays the groundwork for future management and research that will benefit the people of Minnesota for generations to come. Having worked with management agencies throughout the country, I assure you others are looking at Minnesota and encouraged by its leadership in this area of natural resource management.

I thank you for your efforts to promote conservation of Minnesota’s natural resources and help protect freshwater biodiversity. I strongly encourage the committee to approve this important piece of legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "SRD".

Solomon R. David  
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