



117 South First Street • Montevideo, MN 56265

April 4, 2024

Chair Hawj
Senate Environment, Climate, and Legacy Committee
Room 1150
Minnesota Senate Building
95 University Ave W
Saint Paul, MN 55103

Re: S.F. 5048

Dear Chair Hawj and Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition to S.F. 5048 today. My name is Sarah Mooradian, and I am the Government Relations and Policy Director for CURE, a rurally based, non-profit organization dedicated to protecting and restoring resilient towns and landscapes by harnessing the power of the people who care about them.

We strongly oppose the portions of this bill that would open state lands to carbon sequestration proposed by private companies for private gain. Minnesota has no experience with geologic carbon sequestration. We do not know whether geologic sequestration is physically possible in the state, how to monitor or assess its effectiveness if any, nor have we identified or taken an in-depth look at what the risks to environmental and human health may be.

If the Department of Natural Resources is empowered to issue carbon sequestration permits it will have to establish high standards that make up for weak or nonexistent national controls. At the federal level, the oversight of carbon sequestration sites is woefully inadequate—for injection well permits, the Environmental Protection Agency requires at most fifty years of monitoring for leakage, but often with only vague standards that are unenforceable. The U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management have proposed allowing for permanent and exclusive permits to occupy federal lands for this industry—based on that experience, allowing the DNR to permit these activities could permanently privatize our public lands without any public benefit. Thus, rushing to issue rules and permits may mean that this industry can effectively seize public lands without any meaningful controls to assure carbon capture is done competently and for more than a handful of years. Our public lands' existing renewable resources and sustainable uses must take precedence over unproven carbon pollution dumping schemes.

While we understand the need for regulation of these emerging industries, we believe that the discussion must be grounded in transparency and sound information—not speculative and unsubstantiated claims—about the potential risks and benefits, so that Minnesotans can decide whether we want to host such industries. There should be significant opportunity for public comment and consultation with Tribes



before the DNR takes on these complicated new duties. If this bill returns in future years, the agency must be fully funded to do rulemaking and permitting correctly in the first place. To mandate the use of public land for private gain requires careful consideration.

Thank you again to the Committee for hearing our testimony today.

Sincerely,

/s/ Sarah Mooradian

Government Relations & Policy Director

CURE

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