

April 29, 2024

The Honorable Fong Hawj
Chair, Senate Environment, Climate, & Legacy
Minnesota Senate
3231 Minnesota Senate Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Senator Hawj,

Thank you for the productive conversations and thoughtful work on SF 3887, the 2024 Environment and Natural Resources Supplemental Finance and Policy Omnibus. The bill takes important steps to reduce the impact of waste on our environment, to ensure that all Minnesotans have the opportunity to enjoy clean air, and to protect our state's valuable water resources for future generations. The provisions in the bill build on the successes of the 2023 legislative session and advance our shared priorities to protect the environment and human health.

Particularly important components of the bill include:

- **Environmental justice and air quality:** The "Environmental justice areas increased capacity" and "Air monitoring trailer and staff" proposals represent the next phase in the MPCA's work to decrease the disparate pollution burden in environmental justice areas and will support efforts to improve air quality in communities disproportionately affected by pollution.
- **MPCA legal costs:** MPCA's regulatory decisions are often subject to litigation, both from those who wish to see more protections and from those who believe the agency's actions are too stringent. While we continue to work with you and other legislative leaders on long term funding sources for legal costs, I am grateful that the bill recognizes the importance of defending the agency's regulatory actions.
- **MPCA enforcement authority modifications:** Minnesotans expect the MPCA to protect them from pollution. Ensuring that the MPCA has clear legislative authority to respond to regulated party's activities that pose a risk to the health of neighbors or damage the environment will ensure that the agency can meet that expectation, especially in the most egregious situations.

I would also like to thank members who have worked with the agency and stakeholders to advance policy ideas of their own, including:

- Senator Morrison, whose Packaging Waste and Cost Reduction Act represents a critical step forward in the effort to reduce the state's waste problem. This language is the result of extensive work with a broad group of stakeholders, and it reflects effective problem-solving and forward-thinking policy solutions.
- Senator McEwen, who advances bold climate change risk mitigation strategies by requiring study of the costs and risks of future climate scenarios and by establishing grants to support composting at multifamily buildings. It is important to fund the agency's administrative costs grants to guarantee proper oversight and customer service, and I am happy to work with Senator McEwen to make this minor adjustment to the language.

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- Senator Hauschild, whose language on coordinated project plans provides proposers a clear path to efficient completion of environmental review and permitting processes. Coordinated project plans will also ensure transparency for interested members of the public and tribal members.

Again, thank you for the thoughtful work on the bill. We look forward to working with you and committee members as we move into the next stages of the process.

Sincerely,



Katrina Kessler, P.E.
Commissioner