

March 14, 2024

Rick Horton Testimony

Senate State and Local Government and Veterans Committee

Chair: Senator Kari Dziedzic

RE: SF3561

Chair Dziedzic and Members,

My name is Rick Horton, and I am the Executive Vice President of Minnesota Forest Industries. MFI is a trade organization representing the primary wood-consuming mills in the state. Together we transform trees into products we use every day.

MFI is opposed to Senate File 3561, the Extended Producer Responsibility bill, as it pertains to paper products. The American Pulp and Paper Association (attached) shows that nationwide 67.9% of paper, and a staggering 93.6% of cardboard was recycled in 2022! And it shows that paper usage is declining overall.

The 50 States of Recycling Report for Minnesota (attached) shows that 78% of cardboard, boxboard and paper is recycled in this state (gray bar at 4 o'clock). This is the direct result of the commitment our industry has made to recycling.

Paper is made from renewable and sustainably-sourced wood. Managing forests improves forest health, creates wildlife habitat, reduces wildfire risk and creates good-paying jobs in impoverished rural communities. We should be encouraging conversion to paper-based packaging, rather than forcing punitive regulations upon the industry that has been doing the right thing all along.

Given this, we ask that you consider removing all references to paper products from this bill.

Thank you.

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Rick Horton, Executive Vice President, Minnesota Forest Industries





