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Minnesota Senate Environmental, Climate & Legacy Committee

RE: Senate File 1464 on Establishing the Minnesota Sustainable Foraging Task Force

Dear Committee Members,

I was born and raised in Minnesota (North Minneapolis) and am a Vietnam veteran, drafted from Minnesota.

My family and I – wife, Peggy, children, Darin, Shannon and David – enjoyed many camping trips to our Minnesota State Parks. Some of the most enjoyable experiences involved exploring in the woods and observing the native flowers, berries and mushrooms. My youngest son was especially drawn to the colorful and sometimes bizarre shapes of mushrooms. We would consult books on fungi to identify those that were safe to eat, and on occasion, along with the berries, pick some to later eat.

I say “our” State Parks because I considered that they are “owned” by the people of Minnesota. Thus, I was dismayed to read that a few of those, who we entrust to manage our State Parks for the benefit of the people of Minnesota, have taken it upon themselves to decide what is “best” for all. Now, I am sure these people are well-meaning, but to prohibit mushroom foraging without good evidence of harm does not appear to be in the best interest of all.

Although I am not a mycologist, I have a PhD in Microbiology from the University of Minnesota Medical School and took a National Science Foundation fellowship in Soil Science. I know that the great majority of the “body” of a fungal organism lies beneath the soil and that a relatively small portion is the edible part above ground.

I very much support the passage of Senate File 1464 and support the Minnesota Mycological Society as a member of the Sustainable Foraging Task Force.

Thank you,



William P. Pilacinski, PhD