

Chair Hawj and Members of the Senate Environment, Climate and Legacy Committee:



**MCEA writes to support SF 2077, as amended by the A-4 DE amendment.** The Senate Environment budget bill contains important improvements to Minnesota’s electronic waste recycling laws, critical investments in enforcement of Minnesota laws in environmental justice areas, and contains improvements to the permitting provisions. We are disappointed that the bill does not include language discussed in committee last week on wild rice. On balance, MCEA supports the bill and recommends its approval by the committee.

Article 1 of SF 2077 DE continues to make important investments in Minnesota’s response to PFAS “forever chemical” pollution, enforcement of environmental laws (particularly in environmental justice areas), implementation of air toxics rules, implementation of cumulative impact rules to protect communities overburdened by pollution, and monitoring ambient air for air pollution. MCEA strongly supports these initiatives.

Article 6 includes a nation-leading electronic waste producer responsibility program that will move Minnesota toward 100% collection of e-waste. This is an exciting and well-needed update to Minnesota’s existing producer responsibility program for CRT monitors and other devices, which is outdated and covers a decreasing number of devices each year. Right now, most e-waste is either kept in household (in a closet or the “drawer of shame”) or inappropriately disposed of. This is a wasted opportunity to recapture these metals, and it imposes risks and costs on solid waste administrators across the state. MCEA strongly supports Article 6.

MCEA testified against the permitting provisions that comprise Article 7 of the DE amendment to SF 2077 on Friday, while noting the progress made through consultation with a number of stakeholders, including MCEA. While we remain concerned with some areas of Article 7, we were pleased to note that one of our biggest concerns, limiting who could petition the state government for an environmental assessment worksheet, has been addressed in this amendment. Lines 181.21-181.23 preserve the ability of 100 Minnesota residents or property owners to petition for environmental review, while adding the ability of a tribal government to file a petition. As a reminder, this statute requires “material evidence ... [that] demonstrates ... there may be potential for significant environmental effects” to accompany any petition. MCEA supports additional investments into permitting outlined in the bill, including appropriations to address permit backlogs.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Aaron Klemz

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