



April 8, 2025

Senator Fong Hawj  
Chair  
Senate Environment, Climate, and Legacy  
Committee

Senator Steve Green  
Republican Lead  
Senate Environment, Climate, and Legacy  
Committee

The Minnesota Chamber of Commerce, a statewide organization representing more than 6,300 businesses and their more than half a million employees, supports certain provisions and opposes others in the A4 amendment to SF2077, the Senate Environment, Climate, and Legacy omnibus policy bill.

The Chamber supports the following:

- **Including most provisions of SF570 as amended:** Last Friday, April 4, this Committee passed SF570 on an overwhelmingly bipartisan basis, 7-0. This legislation includes several recommendations made by the Minnesota Chamber Foundation in its 2024 report, [“Streamlining Minnesota’s Environmental Permitting Process: Essential For Economic Growth”](#). For example, the legislation splits operating and constructing permits eliminates the need for an Environmental Assessment Worksheet when the project is a mandatory category Environmental Impact Statement; addresses the problem of deeming applications administratively complete; and provides an incentive for the agency to assign more permit engineers onto more complex permits.
- **Using the Environmental Fund to benefit permitting efficiency:** For example, SF2077 funds, among other provisions, accountability, addressing backlogged permits, supporting regulatory business processes, and developing tools to improve permitting.
- **Funding Clean Air Minnesota (CAM):** CAM is a partnership of government, nonprofits, and the private sector to find voluntary solutions that reduce air pollution.

We appreciate the inclusion of these provisions in the bill.

However, we respectfully oppose the following:

- **Creating a new extended producer responsibility system for electronic waste recycling:** This creates another business mandate that will pass expenses on to the consumer. While other states have product stewardship programs for electronic waste, none have product definitions defined as broadly. This EPR program layers on top of another created last biennium for paper and packaging. Addressing the two percent of our waste stream comprised of electronics is imperative to take financial pressures off counties, but creating a product stewardship program of this size and scope is unnecessary and will drive consumers to purchase electronics outside of Minnesota.
- **Establishing a new authority for the state to ticket facility owners and operators seeking environmental permits:** Permit engineers may be unable to turn around agency requested details

after application submission on the most aggressive of timelines. Applicants making a good faith effort to comply with a new request from the agency, that was not part of the original submission, may require subcontracting testing or modeling, which requires time and cost. Punishing applicants for these arbitrary timelines would continue to chill business growth and investment in Minnesota.

- **Including changes in law that will make the permitting process longer, less transparent, and less certain:** The bill includes a new statutory authority for modeling, which is duplicative of existing practice and costly to the agency. It also implements a procedure where the MPCA can stop the clock on permitting goal timelines and require further testing, modeling, and more hurdles for applicants to overcome, just to improve statistics.
- **Increasing water appropriation fees:** In some cases, the cost would nearly double overnight should this language be enacted. Instead of enacting arbitrary increases in statute, the Chamber and our members prefer a rulemaking process that's transparent to the public and offers all parties time to participate.

Thank you for your consideration of our views on the bill. We appreciate the areas where the Chamber and this Committee are able to work together.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Morley', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Andrew Morley  
Director, Environmental Policy  
Minnesota Chamber of Commerce  
[amorley@mnchamber.com](mailto:amorley@mnchamber.com)  
763-221-7523