May 1, 2025

Senator Foung 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 A1 to SF 2781.

The Chamber supports the following:

- **Including SF570 as amended:** On April 4, 2025 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. This provision has now passed this Committee twice.

- **Incorporating January 2025 MPCA report recommendations on lead, cadmium, and PFAS:** The MPCA recommended updating Minnesota statutes to allow for continued use of products that pose little to no threat of exposure to humans. The language as drafted allows for use of lifesaving devices such as firefighting foam and everyday items that do not come into direct contact with a person's skin or mouth. While the Chamber appreciates these measures, there is more work to be done on this topic.

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.

- **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.

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,

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