

Mr. Chair, members of the committee.

My name is Tim Clemens and I am submitting this testimony to support S.F. 1464. I live in District 67B. My State Senator is Fong Hawj and my State House of Representatives member is Jay Xiong.

I am an independent foraging educator. I established Ironwood Foraging, a small business, in 2017 to create profound connections between people, plants, and mushrooms. In partnership with a wide array of 50+ stakeholder organizations, it is my life's work to teach Minnesotans how to forage safely and sustainably.

S.F. 1464 leverages diverse expertise to create a taskforce of knowledgeable and experienced stakeholders to participate in a transparent process of factfinding in collaboration with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources regarding foraging on state public lands in Minnesota. This bill therefore supports creating policy that is scientific, data-driven, and culturally coherent. Collaborative rulemaking helps foster public trust and cooperation, encourages sustainable practices, and aligns with the MNDNR mission of fostering a connection between people and nature.

Foraging is proven to increase volunteerism, foster nature ethics, and build self-efficacy in Minnesotans. Therefore this tradition and living practice is of great benefit to our public lands, water, ecology, and people, with immensely positive second- and third-order benefits. It is my sincere hope that S.F. 1464, and the taskforce it creates, will be remembered for centuries to come for its foresight and proactive support of the foraging tradition, Minnesota's native species, and the lifeway of reciprocal conservation.

Thank you for hearing my testimony and for your thoughtful consideration of this bill,

Tim Clemens