



DEDICATED TO A STRONG GREATER MINNESOTA

To: Representative Rick Hansen and members of the House Environment and Natural Resources Committee

Re: House File 1335

Date: February 20, 2023

Dear Chair Hansen and committee members,

I am writing on behalf of the Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities (CGMC), an organization of more than 100 cities located outside the Twin Cities metropolitan area. We have an interest in bill, H.F. 1335, because it has a direct impact on many of our member cities, who are stewards of Minnesota's waters through their wastewater, drinking water, and stormwater systems.

This legislation requires that, after certain discharges from wastewater facilities, the operator must provide notice to potentially impacted members of the public and downstream drinking water facilities. The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency has worked with our organization, the League of Minnesota Cities, and other city groups on the language regarding notification following sewer overflows. The compromise language provides a workable solution for our wastewater facilities.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please contact me if you have any questions at eawefel@flaherty-hood.com.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Wefel, Lobbyist
Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities



February 24th, 2023

TO: Environment and Natural Resources Finance and Policy

FROM: Andrea Lovoll, Legislative Director, Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy

RE: HF 1335 (Edelson) Public notice

Thank you Chair Hansen and Representative Edelson for taking the time to hear this bill and advancing transparency regarding the health of our freshwater resources. This bill would greatly increase public awareness, generate transparency, and facilitate accountability around public water facilities and the discharges that impact drinking water. My name is Nadia Alsadi and I am the Water Policy Associate at the Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy. I am also a renter in Hennepin County and live within close proximity to several public facilities that discharge wastewater which may include harmful chemicals, including PFAS, a chemical that is hard to overstate its potential danger to human health.

The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) has also clearly indicated the need for this bill through their extensive data on public water systems across the state. In a 2022 study by MDH, over 400 public systems were tested for PFAS contamination, and it was concluded that several of these systems were already above the state health guidance levels, while 67% of these systems had detected lower levels of PFAS.^{1,2} Similarly, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's (MPCA's) PFAS Monitoring Plan identifies sites with discharge that have already tested above the designated Health Risk Limits (HRL's).³ Even if just one of these public water systems are discharging at or above human health risk guidance, the results could be devastating human health impacts to Minnesotans who rely on these systems for their drinking water, including liver cancer, lymphoma, and thyroid disease, among others.

Transparency to the public is imperative – particularly when it concerns drinking water. Access to this information has not always been available, or willingly shared by those responsible. The inclusion of more efficient communication methods will significantly improve timely notice to those impacted by polluted water discharges. As a renter in Richfield, I was pleased to see a report in 2022 by the City of Richfield that shared PFAS/PFOA testing results in my area, and provided clear explanations of the risks associated with these levels. I also laud the City's efforts to share these results in multiple languages. Although this was a voluntary report by the City, it is an example of how transparency and accessibility is valued by the public, and should be equally valued by this Legislature. Those that have been most impacted by harmful discharges have been previously left in the dark. By passing HF 1335, we are turning the light on and giving Minnesotans the information that directly impacts them.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Nadia Alsadi, Water Policy Associate, nalsadi@mncenter.org

Andrea Lovoll, Legislative Director, alovoll@mncenter.org

Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy

¹ Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. 2022 (Dec 20). PFAS Testing of Public Water Systems.

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/pfas.html>

² The Minnesota Department of Health. 2022. Testing PFAS in Minnesota Drinking Water.

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/docs/initiatives/pfastesting.pdf>

³ Minnesota Department of Health. (2022, June 7). State rolls out dashboard showing PFAS monitoring results for drinking water. <https://www.health.state.mn.us/news/pressrel/2022/pfasdash060722.html>