

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

District 1 – Paul Krabbenhoft, Moorhead
District 2 – Frank Gross, Dilworth
District 3 – Jenny Mongeau, Moorhead
District 4 – Kevin Campbell, Moorhead
District 5 – David Ebinger, Moorhead



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January 17, 2023

Senator Nick A. Frentz, Chair
95 University Avenue W.
Minnesota Senate Bldg., Room 3109
St. Paul, MN 55155

Representative Patty Acomb, Chair
593 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Legislative Leaders,

On behalf of the Clay County Board of Commissioners, I am writing to express our concern with bills currently in legislature (HF 7 / SF 4 / SF 41). While counties are supportive of efforts to advance clean energy, this legislation removes certain solid waste resource recovery facilities from the list of eligible energy technology and would lead to the shuttering of all resource recovery facilities when carbon free energy generation is mandated in 2040.


More than 30 Minnesota Counties send waste to 13 facilities that divert waste from landfills and produce energy or refuse derived fuel. These facilities operate in rural MN counties (Blue Earth, Otter Tail, Polk, Pope, Douglas, and Goodhue), as well as metro areas (Olmsted, Washington, and Hennepin). The closure of these facilities would indirectly impact the Perham Resource Recovery Center, which Clay County is a part owner.

These facilities reduce greenhouse gas emissions and prevent trash from going to landfills, where decomposing garbage produces methane, a greenhouse gas at least 20 times more potent than carbon dioxide. The legislation does nothing to address the impacts to these communities when their waste management systems are disrupted, or to mitigate the resulting environmental impacts. Zero carbon alternatives do not yet exist for the disposal of waste that is not reduced, reused, recycled, or composted.

Counties have invested significant resources in these facilities in accordance with state policy established in the waste management hierarchy. We remain committed to working together to promote zero-waste, advance product stewardship programs, and advance environmental justice.

As written, HF 7 / SF 4 / SF 41 puts in motion a clean energy standard that will lead to more landfilling of solid waste and increased GHG emissions into the future.

Respectfully Submitted,


Stephen Larson, Administrator
Clay County
(218) 299-5002

Cc: Senator Mark Johnson
Senator Rob Kupec
Representative Heather Keeler
Representative Deb Kiel
Representative James Joy

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