



Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy

May 1, 2020

To: Chair Freiberg and Members of the Minnesota House Government Operations Committee
From: Aaron Klemz, Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy
Subject: Support for HF 3423 (Water Quality Standards for PFOA / PFOS)

Chair Freiberg and members of the committee, my name is Aaron Klemz and I am the Director of Public Engagement at the Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy (MCEA). MCEA is a nonprofit organization with almost 50 years of experience using law and science to protect Minnesota's environment and the health of its people. MCEA strongly supports Rep. Steve Sandell's HF 3423 and asks for your support as well.

PFOA and PFOS are two perfluorochemicals that have been detected in an increasing number of Minnesota's lakes and rivers, in the groundwater that tens of thousands of Minnesotans drink, and in the fish that anglers catch and eat. Since these chemicals do not break down in the environment, they've been called "forever chemicals." Currently, 33 water bodies in Minnesota have fish consumption advisories for these forever chemicals. This is a serious public health concern. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency says "[e]levated concentrations of PFOS and PFOA in human blood have been linked to a number of potential health effects, including immunotoxicity, decreased sperm count, low birth weight, thyroid disease, and high cholesterol. PFCs have also been associated with endocrine disruption and cancer in animal studies."

Appropriating needed funds to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency will allow them to create science-based water quality standards for PFOA and PFOS. Establishing a water quality standard allows for the designation of impaired waters and gives MPCA more tools to address pollution. Rulemaking is a process that ensures that the best peer-reviewed science is used and the public and all stakeholders have input into the process.

Chair Freiberg and members of the committee, Minnesota has some of the most extensive perfluorochemical pollution in the U.S. Research shows that very low levels of exposure can harm human health. Since Minnesota is at the epicenter of this pollution crisis, we should also be leading in establishing science-based standards to address it.

Thank you for the opportunity to state our strong support of HF 3423, and please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Aaron Klemz
Director of Public Engagement