



**Minnesota Center for
Environmental Advocacy**

March 10, 2020

Re: *Meeting of the House Committee for the Environmental and Natural Resources Finance Division*

Testimony of Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy

Dear: Chairman Hansen, Vice Chair Claflin, and members of the Committee:

Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy (MCEA) is a public interest law firm and advocacy organization that has used law and science to protect Minnesota's environmental and health of its people for almost 50 years. MCEA supports the objective of H.F. 3058, and this proposed bill can make the existing statute in place more robust and inclusive; it is simply applying what is already there to all of the metropolitan counties throughout Minnesota.

The current cumulative levels and effect process under Minn. Stat. §116.07, subd. 4a will remain the same under this bill. Also, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) is still able to issue, continue, and deny air emission permits. This provision also currently states that PCA "may not issue a permit to a facility without analyzing and considering the cumulative levels and effects of past and current environmental pollution from all sources on the environment and residents of the geographic area within the facility's emissions are likely to deposited..." MCEA wants to highlight the importance of this provision because there are often several emitters within a given metropolitan area in Minnesota. A permitted facility may be in compliance with its permit standards and may still emit harmful substances into the air. If multiple permitted facilities in a given area function like this, cumulatively, all of these facilities could produce a significant amount of pollution. This means that if a facility receives a permit without the consideration of the cumulative levels and effects of other facilities in the area, the pollution problems are only going to accumulate and get worse for Minnesotans.

It is essential to broaden the statute's language to all seven metropolitan counties in Minnesota. We need to make sure cumulative levels and effects of environmental pollution are taken into consideration during the permitting process to minimize the environmental impacts in metropolitan communities that live near permitted facilities. MCEA supports H.F. 3058 and sees its implementation as an opportunity to broaden the scope of the permitting process and to protect more Minnesotans.

/s/ Suraya Williams
Legal Fellow
Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy
1919 University Ave. W., Suite 515
Saint Paul, MN 55104
(651) 223-5969
swilliams@mncenter.org

Using the law and science to defend Minnesota's environment.

1919 University Avenue West, Suite 515, Saint Paul, Minnesota 55104
651.223.5969 | info@mncenter.org | mncenter.org