

March 31, 2023

The Honorable Fue Lee
Minnesota State House of Representatives
Chairperson, Minnesota House Capital Investment Committee
Room 120, Minnesota State Capital
St. Paul, MN 55155
651-296-1802

Dear Representative Lee,

Please consider this information related to proposed legislation, Minnesota House File 2547 that is focused on the Freeway Landfill.

My name is Mark Olson. I am a senior environmental scientist at Stantec. I graduated from Gustavus Adolphus College in 1980 with a degree in environmental studies, geography and geology. I have had the opportunity to work for several environmental consulting firms in Minnesota, specializing in hydrogeologic investigations and environmental monitoring networks that is primarily related to solid waste facilities.

Through work plans, reports, development of monitoring networks and review of analytical data and assessment of potential risk, I have also worked closely with Minnesota Pollution Control Agency staff over the years to obtain approvals for the work completed for the numerous different facilities.

In addition, I've worked with many public and private landfill projects throughout the state and have studied and consulted for the Freeway Landfill since the early 1980s.

I am writing this letter to share with you that the important fact that the Freeway Landfill has been responsibly maintained since its closure 33 years ago. And despite years of warnings of the "danger" and "risk" the landfill poses, this landfill poses no immediate, short-term, or long-term risk to the drinking water or the environment.

There are several reasons to support this determination that there isn't any short-term or long-term risks to drinking water. The environmental conditions at the landfill remain essentially the same now as they were in 1988 and 1991 when two superfund Remedial Investigations were completed, both of which concluded that no response actions were required of the site.

Another key fact is that years of testing by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency have included measurements not required of many landfill monitoring programs, and the traces of groundwater impacts that are found are of levels so minute as to not affect the quality of the groundwater. There are also no immediate risks to water from the adjacent Kraemer quarry, which is used as a source of drinking water for Burnsville and Savage.

The perceived future risk the MPCA states is associated with the potential future rise of the Kraemer Quarry Lake, once quarry when dewatering activity ceases when Kraemer stops mining. The Quarry has recently been given a 72-acre expansion, which means there will be decades of additional mining activity.

Finally, since completion of the Remedial Investigations, there has been no call for immediate response actions, only the MPCA's indication of a potential future risk.

That potential risk, and it is important to note that it is only a potential risk, can be readily addressed with the adequate management of the future Kraemer Quarry Lake level. Nothing in the landfill has any impact on existing potable water supplies currently taken from the quarry by the cities of Burnsville & Savage for their residents every year, and there is also no reasonable concern that a future impact would occur.

To put this in perspective, there are well over 100 unlined and open landfills in Minnesota and yet there is no legislation specifically targeting any of those individual landfills.

"Cleaning up Freeway landfill" is a misnomer. There is no need to clean anything up.

Instead, the MPCA wants to use millions of taxpayer dollars to dig up an existing landfill that is causing no risk to human health or the environment and move it three quarters of a mile away to another landfill situated over the *same* groundwater the agency is concerned about.

Freeway Landfill is arguably one of the most tested, most scrutinized landfills in the state. It does not pose a threat to the environment.

It is my opinion that allocating \$165 million dollars or more to "clean up" this landfill is wasteful and unnecessary at a time when there are other environmental issues in Minnesota that represent a real threat that would justify the use of public dollars to address them.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Mark Olson