



February 21st, 2023

TO: House Environment and Natural Resources Finance and Policy Committee
FROM: Nadia Alsadi, Water Policy Associate, Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy
RE: HF 1498 (Pursell) Re: Wetland Banking

Chair Hansen and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for your service to the people of Minnesota and thank you for the opportunity to testify on HF 1498 (Pursell). Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy (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.

Thank you Representative Pursell, and thank you to the committee for taking the time to consider our freshwater resources through this bill today. My name is Nadia Alsadi and I am the Water Policy Associate at the Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy (MCEA). I have a background in wetland ecology and freshwater sciences and management and have spent my career addressing conservation and management needs of wetland and freshwater systems.

HF 1498 is a positive step forward in addressing the gaps and opportunities within our current wetland banking system under No Net Loss. It is imperative that within the wetland banking system, wetland systems are fully understood and accounted for in their ecosystem services and connections to other freshwater habitats. Specifically, peatland systems that are unique to Minnesota are an irreplaceable wetland system that is not fully accounted for in our current wetland banking system. There are currently over 4 billion tons of carbon stored in Minnesota's prized peatlands. The destruction of these areas only exacerbates climate change by emitting greenhouse gasses and eradicating significant carbon storage.

Minnesota has a duty to fully protect these wetlands, and this can be achieved in part through the passing of this bill and a full account of the significant ecosystem services wetlands and peatlands provide.

Thank you for your time and consideration in passing HF 1498.

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Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. (2008, February). The Potential for Terrestrial Carbon Sequestration in Minnesota. <https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/aboutdnr/reports/carbon2008.pdf>