

MEMORANDUM

May 5, 2022

Senator Bill Ingebrigtsen
Senator David J. Tomassoni
Senator Justin D. Eichorn
Senator Bill Weber
Senator Kent Eken

Representative Rick Hansen
Representative Ami Wazlawik
Representative Kelly Morrison
Representative Todd Lippert
Representative Josh Heintzeman

Dear Members of the Environment and Natural Resources Conference Committee (S.F. 4062/H.F. 4492):

The Partnership on Waste and Energy (Partnership) is a Joint Powers Board consisting of Hennepin, Ramsey and Washington counties, formed to address waste management and energy issues. The Partnership seeks to end waste, promote renewable energy and enhance the health and resiliency of communities we serve.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on several provisions that will have significant impact on protecting public health and the environment and that will affect how successful counties and communities can be in reaching challenging statutory goals on waste management.

Provisions the Partnership Supports

- **SCORE Grants:** The Partnership appreciates the investment made in recycling and waste reduction efforts through an increase (\$700,000) to SCORE Grants. This additional funding would help advance state recycling goals and support additional waste reduction efforts at the local level. (*Senate Art. 1, Sec. 2, Subd 2(b)*)

Additionally, the Partnership and several other organizations have supported legislation that phases in redirecting all Solid Waste Management Tax revenues that currently go to the General Fund into SCORE grants. We greatly appreciate the unanimous support this legislation received in the Senate and House Environment & Natural Resources committees this session. We encourage members of this committee to advocate for its inclusion in the omnibus Tax bill.

- **Metropolitan Landfill Contingency Action Trust (MLCAT) Repayment:** The Partnership strongly supports transferring \$29.055 million from the general fund to repay what was borrowed twice from the MLCAT account since 2003 to balance the general fund budget, plus interest and lost earnings. This provision helps provide what is urgently needed now and in the coming years to address costly care needs at metro area landfills and protect public health. (*House Art. 1, Sec. 2, Subd. 3*)
- **Pig's Eye Landfill Task Force:** The Partnership strongly supports creating and funding a task force to coordinate remediation and restoration of the Pig's Eye Landfill Superfund site and addressing PFAS contamination of affected water bodies and groundwater. This approach will create better outcomes to the benefit of public health, the environment and future users of the area's land and waters. (*House Art. 1, Sec. 2, Subd. 2(h); House Art. 2, Sec. 87*)
- **Reducing Sources of PFAS, Lead and Cadmium:** The Partnership is very concerned about the persistent presence of PFAS and toxic heavy metals in the state's land, water and other resources, and the risks these substances pose to human health. The Partnership supports upstream solutions

which are more effective than dealing with legacy costs that taxpayers are often forced to manage after products have been disposed.

- Identify and reduce sources of PFAS. (*House Art. 1, Sec. 2, Subd. 2(d); House Art. 1, Sec. 2, Subd. 2(bb-cc); House Art. 4, Sec. 1-6*)
- Update prohibitions on lead and cadmium. (*House Art. 1, Sec. 2, Subd. 2(y); House Art. 2, Sec. 78*)
- Lead tackle reduction program. (*House Art. 1, Sec. 2, Subd. 2(s)*)
- **Waste Prevention, Recycling and Organics Management:** The Partnership supports several provisions to keep waste out of landfills and help counties meet challenging state waste reduction and recycling mandates.
 - Waste prevention and recycling grant and loan program one-time appropriations. (*House Art. 1, Sec. 2, Subd. 2(e)*)
 - Multifamily composting pilot grant program one-time appropriations. (*House Art. 1, Sec. 2, Subd. 2(m); House Art. 2, Sec. 50*)
 - Zero-waste grant program one-time appropriations. (*House Art. 1, Sec. 2, Subd. 2(w); House Art. 2, Sec. 51*)
 - Compostable products and packaging standards and labeling. (*House Art. 4, Sec. 7*)
 - Carpet stewardship program plan through stakeholder engagement. (*House Art. 1, Sec. 2, Subd. 2(z); House Art. 2, Sec. 95*)
- **Replacing Trees Lost to Emerald Ash Borer:** The Partnership strongly supports the provision to allocate \$10.15 million for grants to replace trees removed due to the emerald ash borer (EAB). This is one important step among many that are urgently needed as EAB continues to spread to more parts of the state. It provides a measure of relief to local governments struggling to restore vital tree canopy lost to this pest. (*House Art. 1, Sec. 3, Subd. 2(k)*)

Provision the Partnership Opposes

- **Unadopted Rules:** The Partnership opposes creating barriers against efficient, orderly and effective implementation of state environmental policy, goals and laws, including impacts on solid waste planning, public information services and county budgets that cause unintended consequences for public health and environmental protection. (*Senate Art. 2, Sec. 57*)

Thank you for the opportunity to present the Partnership's positions in the effort to create an Environment and Natural Resources Omnibus bill that best advances state public health and environmental protection goals required of local governments and that creates partnerships among the state, local government, businesses and non-profit organizations. Please contact Rob Vanasek at Capitol Hill Associates for further information on the Partnership's positions. (rob@capitolhillassoc.com; 612-964-4876)

Sincerely,



Commissioner Fran Miron, Washington County
Chair, Partnership on Waste and Energy