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February 28, 2024

**House File 3874 (Hansen)**

Dear Chair Hansen and House Environment & Natural Resources Committee Members,

The National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB) represents over 10,000 small businesses across Minnesota, including hundreds of family farms. Our mission is to promote and protect the right of our members to own, operate, and grow their businesses.

NFIB Minnesota appreciates the opportunity to comment on HF 3874 (Hansen). Among other modifications, this proposal would increase the maximum penalty for water resource riparian protection violations by 20 times the current amount. The new maximum penalty amount of \$10,000 would apply to first-time and repeat offenders.

Given the 99% compliance rate with the state's riparian protection requirements, we believe a universal increase is unwarranted. It is clear that small farmers take seriously their obligations as stewards of the land. We believe the harshest penalties should be reserved for repeat offenders and a graduated penalty structure is more appropriate.

Thank you for considering the perspective of our members.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John L. Reynolds', is positioned above the typed name.

John L. Reynolds  
Minnesota State Director  
National Federation of Independent Business  
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