

April 21, 2025

Representative Zach Stephenson
Co-Chair, Ways and Means
5th Floor Centennial Office Building
658 Cedar Street
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Representative Paul Torkelson
Co-Chair, Ways and Means
2nd Floor Centennial Office Building
658 Cedar Street
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Dear Co-Chair Torkelson and Co-Chair Stephenson:

On behalf of the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR), thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on House File 2439, the Environment & Natural Resources omnibus bill. BWSR works in partnership with federal, state, Tribal, and local governments, and with landowners to achieve its mission to improve and protect Minnesota's water and soil resources. We appreciate the difficult task of budgeting for the state's environmental priorities over the next biennium, as reflected in the omnibus bill.

Minnesotans value their natural resources and care about clean water, climate impacts, and productive use of their land and infrastructure. We have appreciated the opportunities this session to share BWSR's work and outcomes with the Environment and Natural Resources Finance and Policy Committee.

The House Environment & Natural Resources omnibus bill will require BWSR to reduce its statewide work with local governments and landowners. While BWSR's operational costs have increased over the last biennium, we know that no additional agency appropriation means our output will necessarily decrease. We will do our best to achieve our agency's mission and goals – as well as statutory obligations – knowing that we will be constrained. We also note that the removal of appropriated funds for grassland easements will diminish the leverage of Federal funding via a new CREP agreement and reduce conservation efforts for wetland restoration and water quality improvements.

We look forward to working with House members on this important legislation in the weeks ahead.

Sincerely,



John Jaschke
Executive Director
Board of Water and Soil Resources