

April 24, 2024

The Honorable Rick Hansen
Chair, House Environment & Natural Resources Finance and Policy Committee
Minnesota House of Representatives
407 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Representative Hansen,

I would like to express my appreciation for the thoughtful work that has gone into assembling HF3911, the 2024 Environment and Natural Resources Supplemental Finance and Policy Omnibus. The provisions included in this bill facilitate important steps to reduce the impact of waste on our environment, to ensure that all Minnesotans have the opportunity to enjoy clean air, and to protect our state's valuable water resources for future generations. This bill builds on the successes of the 2023 legislative session and continues to advance our shared work to protect the environment and human health.

I would like to highlight a few specific agency priorities included in the bill:

- **MPCA legal costs:** MPCA's regulatory decisions are often subject to litigation, both from those who wish to see more protections for the environment and human health and from those who believe the agency's actions are too stringent. I am grateful that the committee recognizes the importance of defending our regulatory actions.
- **Environmental justice and air quality:** Two budget proposals focused on air quality in communities disproportionately affected by pollution: "Increased capacity to protect air quality in EJ areas" and "Responsive monitoring" represent the next phase in the MPCA's work to decrease the disparate pollution burden in environmental justice areas.
- **Clarifying MPCA enforcement authorities:** Minnesotans expect the MPCA to protect them from serious pollution violations. Ensuring that the MPCA has clear legislative authority to respond to situations where a regulated party's activities may harm the health of neighbors or damage the environment will ensure that the agency can meet that expectation, especially in the most egregious situations.

I would also like to thank members who have worked with the agency and stakeholders to advance policy ideas of their own. I am pleased to see a number of important policy items in this bill, including:

- Rep. Jordan's Packaging Waste and Cost Reduction Act, which represents a critical step forward in the effort to reduce our waste problem in Minnesota.
- Rep. Hemmingsen-Jaeger's language to phase out mercury-containing lighting, which is common-sense good governance that comes with no real cost to the State of Minnesota.

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- Chair Hansen's language concerning PFAS in biosolids, which is a critical issue that the state needs to keep moving forward on.

Again, thank you for the thoughtful work so far this year. We look forward to working with you and the committee members as we move into the next stages of the process.

Sincerely,



Katrina Kessler, P.E.
Commissioner