



**CONSERVATION  
MINNESOTA**

March 16, 2023

Chair Klevorn and Members of the State and Local Government Finance and Policy Committee,

**We write today to ask for your support of HF 2170 (Berg), establishing global warming impact standards for construction materials used in state buildings and roads.**

At Conservation Minnesota, our mission is to protect the people and the places that Minnesotans love. Reducing emissions and fighting climate change are central to this goal; and ensuring that Minnesotans are leading and benefiting in this process is vital. With Buy Clean and Buy Fair policies, our state can address these emissions in our industrial sector and our infrastructure while building sustainable, local supply chains.

Each year, Minnesota's industrial sector produces the equivalent of roughly 20 million tons of carbon dioxide. That's a similar annual impact to driving 4 million cars, burning 20 billion pounds of coal, powering 3.5 million homes, or clear cutting 21 million acres of forest land (Minnesota only has 17 million acres of forest land). Our state is contributing to large-scale fossil fuel combustion to source its products and materials, and the emissions created by this sector have actually *increased* since 2005.

Industrial emissions are particularly high in steel and concrete production. On average, every ton of steel produced emits 1.85 tons of carbon dioxide. Across the industry, steel production contributes to 7-9% of all fossil fuel-based carbon dioxide emissions. Every ton of concrete produced emits 0.93 tons of carbon dioxide. And the cement industry (a key component of concrete production) contributes to roughly 8% of the world's carbon dioxide. Simply put, if our state intends to take responsibility on climate change, we must take action on emissions in steel and concrete production.

HF 2170 (Berg), or the Buy Clean and Buy Fair Minnesota Act, is an important step toward addressing industrial emissions from materials like steel and concrete, the building blocks of our public infrastructure. By utilizing environmental product declarations, this bill ensures that our state can account for and consider the lifecycle climate impacts of key construction materials such as steel, concrete, and asphalt. It then incentivizes low-emissions construction materials with targeted, climate-conscious procurement for Minnesota's state-led infrastructure. Over time, this policy will foster sustainable supply chains and long-term emissions reductions, helping tackle a significant portion of greenhouse gases in the industrial sector.

In addition, HF 2170 promotes the use of locally produced materials and good-paying union jobs. This system will reward producers with strong environmental and labor standards, and we know that those producers and their suppliers operate right here in Minnesota and across the Midwest.

With HF 2170, the Legislature has an opportunity to kill two birds with one stone, to confront a growing contributor to the climate crisis and to support local producers and their workers. This is what common-sense, holistic climate policy looks like. *We respectfully urge your support.*

Sincerely,

**Nels Paulsen**, Policy Director +1 (608) 469-5299

[nels@conservationminnesota.org](mailto:nels@conservationminnesota.org)

**David Pelikan**, Policy Associate +1 (262) 685-7265

[david@conservationminnesota.org](mailto:david@conservationminnesota.org)