

Feb 26, 2024

Chairs Vang, Pursell, and Committee members:

I write in opposition to HF 4044 because we should not be awarding tax credits without evidence of compliance and accurate water quality measurements.

There is not current information as to what practices qualify as "certified", nor what best practices farmers are actually implementing.

To date there are not measurements required for in-field or edge of field sites.

There is no governance for the advisory board requiring members to be certified farmers.

There are no statistics that show how water quality results are measured and reported by any agencies.

There is no restriction on tile drainage, the use of fertilizers, pesticides and other agricultural chemicals.

Neonic treated seeds degrade the soil and contaminate surface and ground waters, yet are permitted on all farm acres.

To date the current program has cost taxpayers over \$54 million.

In the last 10 years, there have been no documented improvements in water quality as a result of the current program.

I have several organic farm family friends that strive hard to be good stewards of their land and waters and follow all the best practices and then some: no tillage, no neonics or other agricultural chemicals used on their property, use cover crops, they raise their own feed and their animals are on pasture, install native plantings to prevent erosion and sustain the soil health. Their work and hours are long, their reward is the satisfaction that they are simply doing the right thing as stewards of their land and animals.

Without any real measurement of compliance, farmers should not receive tax credits. Please oppose HF 4044.

Thank you,
Margot Monson, entomologist, beekeeper
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