



March 20, 2024

Rep. Rick Hansen  
Environment and Natural Resources Finance and Policy Committee  
407 State Office Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Hansen and members of the committee,

On behalf of the Minnesota Corn Growers Association's (MCGA) nearly 7,000 members I appreciate the opportunity to provide written comments on HF 4698.

MCGA members are committed to working with state and local government's during the proposal, design, and environmental impact evaluation phases of a project. Minnesota already has a robust environmental review process as well as specific requirements on feedlots starting at 300 or more animal units and additional requirements on feedlots with 1000 or more animal units. These requirements include a manure management plan, public notice, emergency disaster plans and engineered construction plans. The manure management plan gives livestock farmers the direction they need to apply manure nutrients in a way that reduces impacts to groundwater and delivers a high-quality alternative to commercial fertilizer for farmers to grow their crop. The existing permit process contains a framework for an Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) to be completed. Once a feedlot completes an EAW, the MPCA can evaluate and determine if additional study needs to happen and can at that point require an Environmental Impact Statement. For these reasons, MCGA would oppose HF 4698 and would like to discuss with the author ways that we can improve review standards within the current framework.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide written comments. If you have any questions please feel free to reach out to MCGA's Senior Public Policy Director Amanda Bilek at [abilek@mncorn.org](mailto:abilek@mncorn.org)

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dana Allen-Tully".

Dana Allen-Tully  
President  
Minnesota Corn Growers Association



March 19, 2024

Representative Rick Hansen  
407 State Office Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Hansen and members of the committee,

On behalf of the Minnesota Soybean Growers Association's (MSGA), an organization that represents the interests of our state's 25,000 soybean farmers, we thank you for the opportunity to submit written comments on HF4698.

The state of Minnesota has in place a complex framework of regulations for animal agriculture operations with 300 or more animal units. These existing regulations and local zoning ordinances already place a large burden on animal agriculture operations in Minnesota. We have seen facilities going to neighboring states rather than deal with the regulations in place in Minnesota.

Animal agriculture is soy's largest customer. These operations add value to our soybean crop through local crushing and processing facilities. We respectfully oppose SF 4234 and the burdens it places on new operations. We would love to work with the author that may be able to address concerns, without adding costs or new regulations on animal agriculture facilities.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide written comments. Please reach out to our Executive Director, Joe Smentek, at 507-381-6595 or [Jsmmentek@mns soybean.com](mailto:Jsmmentek@mns soybean.com) to discuss this more or to work on these issues.

Sincerely,

Bob Worth  
President, Minnesota Soybean Growers Association

House Environment and Natural Resources Policy and Finance Committee

Dear Chair Hansen and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Minnesota Agri-Growth Council (AgriGrowth), I am writing to express our opposition to HF4698 requiring a mandatory environmental impact statement (EIS) for large animal projects in Minnesota.

Founded in 1968, AgriGrowth convenes leaders from across Minnesota's agri-food system and advocates on behalf of our industry. Our 150 members include farmers, cooperatives, academic institutions, lenders, legal and other service providers, transportation and energy companies, and agribusinesses.

AgriGrowth members work diligently to set our annual state legislative priorities. For more than a decade, those priorities have included the need to reform and improve Minnesota's regulatory process. Unanimous agreement exists among our members that this process is not based on data, science, or modern production methods and limits our farmers, cooperatives, and agribusinesses unable to compete in our region, nation, and the world.

With nearly \$40 billion in total value added each year, the agri-food industry is Minnesota's second largest economic driver and an integral part of our state's rural and urban economy. According to Minnesota's Ag Economic Contribution Study, our industry also contributes \$106 billion in sales, \$21.4 billion in household income, and 400,000 jobs to our state. Not only do increasing requirements limit our industry and our state's economic success, they also send a clear message to firms and investors that Minnesota is not interested in their business.

We believe the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) already has a thorough process for environmental review of animal feedlots. In fact, because of our focus on improving Minnesota's regulatory process, AgriGrowth and 7 other state ag associations have been meeting regularly with MPCA for more than a year to discuss more practical guidelines and processes for permitting. We appreciate that opportunity to make input into what is already a robust MPCA process.

We oppose restrictions that not only increase the regulatory burden and costs associated with doing business in our state, but also dampen the ability of our great industry to continue to provide jobs, food, fuel, and fiber to our state and the world. Sincerely,



Tamara A. Nelsen  
Executive Director



March 19, 2024

House Environment and Natural Resources Finance and Policy Committee  
Chair Representative Rick Hansen  
10 State Office Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Chair Hansen and members of the committee,

The Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association (MSCA) respectfully submits the following written testimony on HF 4698 requiring an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for large animal projects. The MSCA represents around 1,000 members in the state of Minnesota.

Beef producers strive to ensure they leave the land better than they found it for future generations. They go above and beyond to protect the environment because it is crucial for their operations.

Minnesota beef feedlots over 1,000 animal units are regulated through Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's permitting process. This includes National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) and State Disposal System (SDS) permits.

The EIS was created with the intention of fact finding, but the EIS can be leveraged by organizations to increase the costs in order to discourage proposed projects, instead of finding legitimate facts about the project.

MSCA supports that the individual, group or organization filing a petition for an EIS be responsible for additional costs incurred by the EIS process.

We would respectfully oppose HF 4698 as it may hinder agricultural expansion in the state of Minnesota.

Thank you for your consideration.

Kaitlyn Root

Executive Director, Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association