



HOUSTON COUNTY

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April 1, 2025

Representative Anderson, Chair
House Capital Investment Committee
2nd Floor Centennial Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Representative Hansen, Chair
House Capital Investment Committee
5th Floor Centennial Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Re: Support for SE Regional Groundwater Protection and Soil Health Initiative (HF 2916)

Dear Chair Anderson, Chair Hansen, and Committee Members:

On behalf of the Houston County Board of Commissioners, I write to respectfully urge your support for HF 2916. Thank you for hearing the bill and for the opportunity to comment.

HF 2916 provides funding to implement a regional groundwater protection and soil health initiative in southeast Minnesota where karst geology is prevalent and groundwater is susceptible to contamination, like nitrate.

The funding will be used to expand a cost-share program piloted by Olmsted County to 10 other counties in the region. The program promotes a variety of management practices that will help reduce nitrate leaching on agricultural land. It has demonstrated success and adoption by producers - approximately 25% of producers in Olmsted County enrolled in the program in 2024 and more are anticipated in 2025.

Houston County would like to provide our farmers with an opportunity to enroll in a program like this. We know the groundwater in our region is vulnerable to contamination and believe this program will have tremendous benefits for our water and soil resources.

Thank you for your consideration of HF 2916. Communities across the entire region will benefit from this investment which will have long-term impacts for safer and cleaner drinking water and it will also help preserve and protect our natural resources for future generations.

Sincerely,

Eric Johnson, Houston County Board Chairperson