



**THE HUMANE SOCIETY  
OF THE UNITED STATES**

1255 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, NW  
Suite 450  
Washington, DC 20037  
P 202-452-1100  
F 202-778-6132  
humanesociety.org

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Tuesday, February 9, 2021

**RE: Environment and Natural Resources Finance and Policy- HF 387**

Dear Chair Hansen and Representatives,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of House File 387, authored by Representative Vang, on behalf of the members and supporters of the Humane Society of the United States in Minnesota. This bill will eliminate the commercial harvest of painted, snapping, and spiny softshell turtles in Minnesota.

Turtles are an important part of Minnesota's ecosystems. In our state, turtle populations face many threats, including habitat loss, pollution, disease, climate change, and over harvest.

Turtles are also long-lived animals, and many species take a decade or more to mature. Once mature, an adult female may lay eggs for 50 or more years. Consequently, losses of adults due to harvest result in significant population-level effects because they deprive individuals of decades of reproduction.

Minnesota is one of fewer than 25 states that still allow commercial harvest of wild turtles. Thousands of turtles are still harvested annually by remaining Minnesota licensees and there is no limit on their harvest.

These existing threats, combined with turtles' biology, require an end to their commercial harvest in Minnesota. House File 387 will achieve this, while retaining recreational harvest and allowances for turtle races. We urge your support.

Sincerely,

Christine Coughlin  
Minnesota State Director  
Humane Society of the United States