



Lake Pepin  
LEGACY ALLIANCE .ORG

February 21, 2024

Re: HF 3389 – Drain Tile Reporting Required

Chair Hansen and Members of the Committee

On behalf of the Lake Pepin Legacy Alliance, we wish to offer support for HF3389 to ensure the public, and particularly the downstream recipients of our drained waters, have an opportunity to understand the upstream decisions that will affect their own land and water.

The cumulative impact of private drainage activities on our public waters results in greater flood damage to river towns, accelerated erosion, increased sedimentation at the head of Lake Pepin, and an endless battle to restore our already impaired lakes, rivers, and streams.

Without knowledge of the full extent of drainage – public and private – the job of managing our watersheds, much less implementation of mitigative measures to achieve water quality improvements called for under state and federal laws and watershed management plans is an impossible task.

In 2020, Lake Pepin Legacy Alliance joined a coalition of organizations to support the recognition of Limbo Creek as a public water because it served as an example of the type of wetland complex that can provide water storage, flood control, and water quality benefits locally and downstream. Not to mention that it meets the statutory definition of a public water. We were only able to support this effort because we were aware of the issue. Without information we cannot make informed decisions about our land and water.

Thank you for hearing this bill,

Rylee Hince  
Executive Director  
Lake Pepin Legacy Alliance

February 21, 2024

Re: HF 3389 – Drain Tile Reporting Required

Chair Hansen and Members of the Committee

On behalf of the undersigned organizations representing thousands of citizens throughout Minnesota, we wish to offer support and thanks for hearing HF 3389. We urge your support for passage. This common sense bill requires reporting of any new or expanded private drainage activities to local soil and water conservation districts. This is long overdue!

With a dramatic increase in private drainage in recent years, the impacts of resulting rapid transfer of water to downstream landowners, public drainage systems, and public waters causes increased flooding, erosion and impacts to water quality in our already impaired streams and lakes.

Without knowledge of the full extent of drainage – public and private – the job of managing our watersheds, much less implementation of mitigative measures to achieve water quality improvements called for under state and federal laws and watershed management plans is an impossible task for watershed management organizations.

Thank you for hearing this bill. We urge each of you to support passage of this bill into law.

Anglers for Habitat  
Coalition for a Clean Minnesota River  
CURE  
Friends of the Minnesota Valley  
Lake Pepin Legacy Alliance  
Land Stewardship Project  
Minnesota Division of the Izaak Walton League of America  
Minnesota Valley Chapter Izaak Walton League of America  
Minnesota Well Owners Organization  
Water Legacy



Minnesota House Environment and Natural Resources Finance and Policy Committee  
Chair Rick Hansen

February 20, 2024

Re: Supporting HF 3389

Chair Hansen and Members,

The Minnesota Environmental Partnership and undersigned organizations support HF 3389 (Pursell), which requires notification of the local Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) when drain tile is installed or modified, and an annual report to the Board of Water and Soil Resources.

Minnesota farms have been installing drain tile at a rate of up to 100 million feet per year, according to University of Minnesota Extension. Currently, there is no requirement that installations be reported, nor is there a system for reporting and tracking these installations, which can have significant cumulative downstream impacts on public water resources.

New and enlarged tiling increases the amount, velocity, and erosive potential of water that enters public drainage systems and downstream public waters. Notification of local SWCDs provides valuable information that can be used to anticipate impacts to public drainage systems, wetlands, and downstream public waters.

This bill is a good first step that begins the process of understanding the impact of tiling on water resources in Minnesota. HF 3389 clearly delineates between “repair and regular maintenance” of existing systems, which are not required to be reported, and modifications that “enlarge, extend, deepen, reline, improve, replace, or otherwise intentionally alter” existing systems. HF 3389 is solely a reporting and notification bill; it does not impose any regulation on the installation of drain tile.

Thank you to Rep. Pursell for offering HF 3389 and to Chair Hansen for hearing this bill. We believe that the House Environment and Natural Resources Committee should advance the bill and continue this important conversation about ensuring that we track changes on the landscape that can impact public water resources.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steve Morse".

Steve Morse  
Executive Director

*Submitted on behalf of the following organizations:*

A.C.E.S.

Alliance for Sustainability

CURE

Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy

League of Women Voters Minnesota

Minnesota Trout Unlimited

Pollinator Friendly Alliance

Resilient Cities and Communities

Save Lake Superior Association

Save Our Sky Blue Waters

Sierra Club North Star Chapter

St. Paul Audubon Society

Sustainable Farming Association

Vote Climate

Wild Rivers Conservancy