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I regret that I am unable to be with you all today on Water Action Day to stand up to protect Minnesota's incomparable legacy of clean water. Though I can't be with you as I had hoped to be, I am grateful to each of you that you are here to do this very simple but critical task of communicating with your representatives on this most significant issue of protecting our state's rivers lakes and streams.


Minnesota is blessed with some of the most spectacular waters in the world. We're the headwaters of three continental watersheds; the great Mississippi River flowing south to the Gulf of Mexico, the Great Lakes flowing east to the Atlantic Ocean and the Red River of the North flowing to Hudson Bay. We're at the top of the watershed. It all flows downhill from here and we have a responsibility to make sure those waters are healthy. The quality of our rivers, lakes and streams has long defined our state as a desirable place to live and work and raise a family.

Minnesota has a long history of leadership on the environment. The protections for our water and environment, which are now threatened by the legislature, have served our state well. These protections have set us apart from other countries and other states. We must not allow the short-sighted motives of some of the MN Legislature to undo this legacy of robust protection for the waters we all share.

Many of the environmental protections now threatened by some leaders of the MN Legislature were the result of bi-partisan work and a broad bi-partisan commitment to conservation which used to be a strong conservative value.

Protecting our treasured waters has never been easy. There have always been interests who seek to weaken our laws. We must not let this happen now. Those downstream from us and future generations are counting on us to succeed in defeating these shortsighted and extreme proposals. Your presence here today and your conversations with your representatives sends a strong message that Minnesotans care deeply about their streams and wetlands, their fishing holes and their drinking water supplies. Thank you for being here to stand up for these treasures. You have my deepest respect and gratitude.

With best wishes,


Walter Mondale