



To: The Minnesota Senate

Re: The Safe Drinking Water Fee (SF 2452 – Art. 9, Sec. 8)

April 30, 2019

Dear Senator,

We, the undersigned organizations, are writing to express our strong support for the increase to Minnesota's Safe Drinking Water Fee included in the Senate Omnibus Health and Human Services Bill (SF 2452 – Article 9, Section 8, lines 290.7 – 290.11).

Protecting our drinking water

We believe that all Minnesotans have a right to clean, safe drinking water no matter where they live. Safe and reliable drinking water is essential for public health, community prosperity and quality of life.

That is why the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) works closely with 7,000+ drinking water systems to test water, inspect water systems, and work with communities to solve critical drinking water problems. As you may know, this vital public health work is supported by Minnesota's Safe Drinking Water Fee.

The Safe Drinking Water Fee

This modest annual fee (currently \$6.36 per connection) helps the MDH to provide cost-effective assistance that results in over 99% compliance with drinking water standards each year.

Unfortunately, this fee has not been adjusted since 2005. Since then, the demands on this fee revenue have increased substantially:

- Inflation has increased by 28%, eroding the buying power of fee revenue;
- Our aging water infrastructure has become more costly to maintain; and
- New drinking water contaminants such as pharmaceuticals, personal care products, and cyanobacteria have emerged as threats to safe and reliable public water supplies.

Increasing the Safe Drinking Water Fee

Article 9, Section 8 of SF 2452 includes a provision that increases the annual Safe Drinking Water Fee from \$6.36 to \$9.72 per connection/yr.

This modest fee increase (less than a penny a day) will help provide the additional resources the MDH needs to continue to keep Minnesotans safe.

We urge you to support this important provision in the Omnibus Health and Human Services Bill when it comes before you on the Senate floor.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steve Morse". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Steve" and last name "Morse" clearly distinguishable.

Steve Morse
Executive Director

Alliance for Sustainability

A.C.E.S. (Austin Coalition for Environmental Sustainability)

CURE (Clean Up Our River Environment)

Clean Water Action - Minnesota

Environment Minnesota

Friends of the Cloquet Valley State Forest

Friends of the Minnesota Scientific and Natural Areas

Friends of the Mississippi River

Friends of the Parks and Trails of St. Paul and Ramsey County

Izaak Walton League - Minnesota Division

Land Stewardship Project

Lutheran Advocacy

Mankato Area Environmentalists

Minnesota Native Plant Society

Minnesota Ornithologists Union

MN350 Action

Renewing the Countryside

Save our Sky Blue Waters

St. Croix River Association

Wilderness in the City