



April 20, 2023

Members of the Minnesota Senate

Re: HF 2310- Senate Omnibus Environment, Natural Resources, Climate, and Energy Finance and Policy bill.

Dear Senator,

On behalf of the Minnesota Environmental Partnership and the organizations signed below, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to submit comments on the Senate Omnibus Environment, Natural Resources, Climate, and Energy Finance and Policy bill. We greatly appreciate the many good provisions and targeted investments made in this bill to protect our clean water, natural resources, and the health of all Minnesotans and help us mitigate and prepare for climate change. This will greatly accelerate our progress toward a just and sustainable future. We are pleased to see the overall increase in funding to protect and restore these important resources.

We would like to highlight some key provisions in this bill that our statewide coalition members believe are especially important in moving Minnesota forward by protecting our climate, environment and the health of our people.

First, this bill takes important steps to center people in our public institutions and environmental justice in policy solutions and appropriations.

**Cumulative Impacts Analysis in Overburdened Communities:** Communities overburdened by pollution desperately need protection from new pollution sources. This bill would require the MPCA to take into account the cumulative impacts of pollution in environmental justice areas when granting permits. Importantly, people in both urban and rural areas are overburdened by pollution, meaning that this cumulative impact analysis must apply to all environmental justice areas in Minnesota, not just urban centers. Art. 4, Sec. 55, pg. 111.

**PFAS Provisions and Harm Reduction:** PFAS chemicals, also known as “forever chemicals,” pollute our water and threaten public and environmental health. The costs of cleanup or doing nothing far outweigh the costs to implement a nonessential use ban. This language includes information disclosure for products containing PFAS, as well as prohibition of PFAS in firefighting foam. Art 4, Sec 61, Subd 2, pg 127 - firefighting foam, Art. 4, Sec. 57, pg. 118 - products containing PFAS, Art. 4, Sec. 57, Subd. 5, pg. 121 - non-essential use ban.

Second, this bill advances natural climate solutions that provide ecological and societal benefits.

- The bill invests in soil health activities to achieve water quality, soil productivity, and climate change resiliency or carbon sequestration benefits. Art. 1, Sec. 4, pg. 44

Third, this bill champions and accelerates a just transition toward climate solutions.

- **Minnesota Climate Innovation Finance Authority** addresses existing inequities in financing access, promotes local jobs, and leverages historic federal and state funding to bolster climate solutions that benefit everybody. Art. 2, Sec. 2, pg. 54.
- **Prewetherization and Weatherization support** will reduce energy use in existing residential and commercial buildings, providing assistance especially to low-income people. Art. 2, Sec. 2, pg. 50-51.
- **Heat pump rebates** will reduce demand for natural gas heating and are more efficient cooling systems. Art. 2, Sec. 2, pg. 55.
- **Solar on Schools and Solar on Public Buildings:** These programs will expand public benefit from solar photovoltaic power generation and reduce costs. Art. 2, Sec. 2, pg. 49-50.
- **Distribution Energy Resources System Upgrades** will address interconnection issues and ensure that the grid is ready to support further deployment of renewable energy and storage technologies. Art. 3, Sec. 2, pg. 63.
- **EV Rebates and Grants for EV Infrastructure, Electric panel upgrade grants** provide critical steps for electrifying our economy and adding capacity for EV infrastructure. Art. 2, Sec. 2, pg. 53 and 55.

We thank you for your leadership and for your consideration. Please proudly support this historic legislation to protect the people and resources of our great state.

Sincerely,



Steve Morse  
Executive Director

*Submitted on behalf of the organizations listed below.*

Clean Water Action Minnesota

CURE (Clean Up the River Environment)

Izaak Walton League Minnesota Division

Izaak Walton League W. J. McCabe Chapter\*

Environmental Justice Coordinating Council (EJCC)\*

Eureka Recycling

Friends of the Boundary Waters

Friends of the Mississippi River

Land Stewardship Project

League of Women Voters Minnesota

Lutheran Advocacy Minnesota

Minnesota Interfaith Power & Light

Minnesota Trout Unlimited

Pollinator Friendly Alliance

Resilient Cities and Communities

Roots Return Heritage Farm LLC\*

Upper Mississippi River Region of the League of Women Voters\*

Vote Climate

*\*Denotes non-MEP member organization*