

April 15, 2024

Chair John Marty
Minnesota Senate Finance Committee
3235 Minnesota Senate Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Re: Concerns about Clean Water Fund appropriations in SF5116

Dear Chair Marty and committee members,

We are writing in support of the Clean Water Council recommendations for supplemental funding projects, which have been significantly altered in the current Legacy omnibus bill, SF5116. With an additional roughly \$25 million available after the February forecast in the Clean Water Fund, this is an important opportunity to make headway on urgent water issues – and we are concerned about the items detailed below.

After two years of gathering input from water experts and stakeholders from around the state, the Clean Water Council unanimously approved its [revised supplemental funding recommendations](#) on March 18. However, on March 21, the Senate Environment, Climate, and Legacy Committee introduced a number of changes to these recommendations in SF5116.

This bill reduces the Council's recommendations in six areas of need that address timely challenges and will have a significant on-the-ground impact:

- Cuts \$402,000 from the AgBMP Loan program, which helps farmers purchase needed equipment for practices that benefit soil health and water quality.
- Cuts \$1,873,000 from nitrate response in southeast Minnesota by removing local capacity funding, a critical component of the MDH public health response and EPA workplan.
- Cuts all \$326,000 from MPCA's River and Lake Monitoring and Assessment Program.
- Cuts \$1,000,000 from MPCA subsurface sewage treatment systems (SSTS) low-income grants, which provides technical wastewater assistance to small communities.
- Cuts \$1,949,000 from the BWSR Working Lands and Floodplain Easements program.
- Cuts \$500,000 from the University of Minnesota Stormwater Research Council grants.

We ask that you please reconsider fully funding the Clean Water Council recommendations to ensure these critical water quality projects move forward this year. Thank you for your attention to this matter and for your work on behalf of the State of Minnesota.

FRESHWATER

The Nature Conservancy



Minnesota Environmental Partnership

