

FRESHWATER

March 24, 2026

Chair Sen. Founq Hawj
Minnesota Senate Environment, Climate, and Legacy Committee
Room 1150 Minnesota Senate Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Re: Proposed changes for users of large amounts of groundwater SF3852

Chair Hawj and committee members,

As a science-based organization with a focus on water sustainability, we are closely following how large water users, including data centers, are sited, designed, permitted and operated in the state. The availability of clean water is essential for healthy communities, ecosystems, and economies. These projects can have a profound impact on the future of Minnesota water supplies.

We appreciate that bill SF3852 continues to promote a deeper understanding of the nuances around water use and permitting of large water users in the state. More specifically, we like that this bill broadens the applicability to all large water users over 100 million gallons per year, not just data centers. We appreciate the attempt to clarify state government and local government roles around water permitting. We support the formalized notification of regional stakeholders, including nearby municipalities. And we support the introduction of community feedback and a comment period. Proactive community engagement has been missing in many of the recent proposed developments.

We hope the intent of this bill is that it applies to all large water use, not just groundwater as the committee agenda title suggests. We also have concerns with how this bill would be implemented, and would encourage the committee to consider how local and state governments would work closely together to implement these permitting requirements. We look forward to being a part of continued discussion on this matter.

Thank you for considering our feedback.



Michelle Stockness, PE

Executive Director, Freshwater