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March 5, 2021

Representative Rick Hansen  
Chair, House Environment and Natural Resources  
Finance and Policy Committee  
407 State Office Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155

[rep.rick.hansen@house.mn](mailto:rep.rick.hansen@house.mn)  
[peter.strohmeier@house.mn](mailto:peter.strohmeier@house.mn)

Re: Minnesota Forestry Association (MFA)—Support for House File 214

Dear Chairman Hansen:

The MFA has been advocating for private forest land owners since its formation in 1876. Private forest lands play a very important role in maintaining our forest cover and providing wood fiber for our forest products industries. Over 6,700,000 acres, or 42%, of the forest land in Minnesota is in private ownership.

Representative Lippert's bill calls for forest activity which will naturally sequester carbon to tree growth. This is a means by which we can mitigate a portion of the excess carbon which is being released into our atmosphere and contribute to climate change.

Over the years, we have seen many changes to our forests, and change continues. It is important that every aspect of our forest management system from research to providing wood fiber for our industries recognize the need to develop climate resilient tree species that will ensure that we continue to enjoy the many values that our forests provide.

These two elements of the bill, natural carbon sequestration and the development and adaptation of resilient tree species are vitally important to ensuring healthy forests in Minnesota's future. These are environmental and economic imperative.

We would urge the Legislature to enact these changes for the benefit of all Minnesotans.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Gina M Hugo'.

Gina Hugo  
Forest Resource Specialist  
Minnesota Forestry Association

cc: Representative Todd Lippert ([rep.todd.lippert@house.mn](mailto:rep.todd.lippert@house.mn))  
Legislative Assistant ([Lindy.Sowmick@house.mn](mailto:Lindy.Sowmick@house.mn))



Representing:

Commercial Logging Contractors

Conservation Organizations

County Land Departments

Department of Natural Resources

Environmental Organizations

Forest Products Industry

Game Species Management

Indian Affairs Council

Labor Organizations

Nonindustrial Forest Landowners

Research and Higher Education

Resort and Tourism Industry

Secondary Wood Products

Manufacturers

USDA – Forest Service

March 11, 2021

Environment and Natural Resources Finance and Policy Committee

Chair: Rep. Rick Hansen

RE: H.F. 214

Mr. Chair and Committee members I am Pete Aube, Chair of the Minnesota Forest Resources Council. Thank you for allowing me to testify this morning on behalf of the Council and, thank you to Representative Lippert for bringing heightened attention to climate change and sustainable forest management.

In 1995 when the Sustainable Forest Resources Act (SFRA) was established, its comprehensive provisions to sustainably manage, use and protect Minnesota's forest resources were groundbreaking. SFRA has since proven the test of time. The Act's provisions and approach are as important, relevant, and useful today as they were 25 years ago.

Last fall, the Council published a report on [Climate Change and Minnesota's Forest](#), wherein we described the changing climate as a major threat to our environment and sustainable forest management. Our forests cover one-third of the state and provide extremely important ecosystem services, wildlife habitat, and an economic engine from tourism and the forest product industry for our rural and tribal communities. In addition, forestlands play a significant role in sequestering and storing carbon which will be an essential tool for building a smart climate strategy.

Two main issues within forestry and climate change, and as highlighted by Representative Lippert's legislation, is using forests for natural carbon storage and helping our forests transition to a climate-resilient species composition. Choosing appropriate tree species that are expected to thrive in the emerging climate will be essential to helping our forests resist the impacts of climate change, be resilient, and possibly transition to novel compositions. Our Climate Change report provides insight into these adaptation strategies.

While our forests are adapting to climate change, they still provide an excellent opportunity to store carbon naturally. Once again MFRC's Climate Report provides key approaches to increasing carbon sequestration in our climate change era. Reforestation, modification to management practices, and promoting the use of all wood products are all approaches that sequester and store carbon in forests and products. This report also offers recommendations for policy actions and program adjustments and I am pleased that the Legislature is furthering the work the Council has laid out.

To combat the forces of climate change we need to be bold, strategic, and proactive in our policies and programs moving forward. With the authorities granted to us by the Sustainable Forest Resources Act, the Council is committed to helping chart the course moving forward.

Thank you Chair Hansen and Ranking Minority Member Wazlawik for allowing me to share this brief testimony. I will stand for questions if time allows.