

## Testimony of Deanna White to the House Capital Investmen Division Committee

March 16, 2021

Good afternoon Chair and members of the committee,

My name is Deanna White and I am the State Director of Clean Water Action. We have been working to protect Minnesota's environment and public health in Minnesota since 1982. I am sharing this testimony in support of HF 1100 on behalf of our more than 50,000 Minnesota members.

We supports HF 1100 because it invests in desperately needed water infrastructure that will help deliver drinking water to Minnesotans, reduce waste, and reduce wastewater effluent polluting our surface waters. Everyone needs safe and affordable drinking water. Most Minnesotans can readily turn on their taps and have safe water anytime of the day but that doesn't happen without the necessary infrastructure.<sup>1</sup> Nearly 80% of Minnesotans receive their drinking water from public water systems, while about 20% use private wells.

About 75% of Minnesotans get their drinking water from groundwater sources.<sup>2</sup> Being the "Land of 10,000 Lakes" and boating more than 90,000 miles of rivers, lakes and streams – it can be easy to take clean water and drinking water for granted in Minnesota. However, providing safe drinking water is not free and drinking water systems in Greater Minnesota struggle with aging infrastructure contaminant challenges, and limited funds.

There are many costs to deliver safe and affordable water including a need to treat raw source water to ensure it is safe to drink and meet health standards. There is a network of thousands of miles of water pipes and pumps that deliver the drinking water to the tap. These systems need to be updated and maintained regularly. The expense involved can decrease or increase depending on how much pollution has to be removed from our drinking water sources.

<sup>1</sup> According to MDH, in 2018, more than 99 percent of Minnesotans drinking water from public water systems that met all federal standards throughout the year. Minnesota Department of Health. "Minnesota Drinking Water Annual Report for 2019," <https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/docs/report2018.pdf>. p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

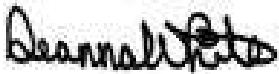
<sup>3</sup> Ibid. p.35

According to the Minnesota Department of Health, Minnesota has a huge deficit of \$7.4 billion in drinking water infrastructure over the next 20 years.<sup>3</sup> Last year's bonding bill included significant funding for clean water infrastructure grant and loan programs administered by the Public Facilities Authority (PFA). While this funding was necessary and appreciated, PFA programs remain underfunded and dozens of critical projects are currently on the waiting list.

This year we are supporting continued investment in clean water infrastructure that HF 1100 provides. An additional \$100 million in bonding funding for the PFA programs will help protect our state's waters and help get us closer to ensuring every Minnesotan has access to safe and affordable drinking water.

Please keep the health and well-being of all of Minnesotans in mind by including HF1100 in the upcoming bonding bill.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Deanna White". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

Deanna White  
State Director, Clean Water Action