Minnesota Environmental Partnership

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RE: Please Vote NO on Wild Rice Waters and Nullifying of Water Quality Standards

To: Chairperson Carrie Ruud and
       Members of the Senate Environment & Natural Resources Policy & Legacy Finance Committee

March 19, 2018

Dear Senator:

We, the undersigned organizations and the citizens we represent, respectfully **ask you to vote NO on SF 2983 – a bill removing a water quality standard that protects wild rice**.

The science supporting retaining existing sulfate standards for wild-rice waters is not disputed: wild rice will largely not grow in waters with a sulfate content greater than 10 parts per million. Sulfate's effects through chemical transformations in the sediments cause a series of reactions that negatively impact the chemistry and biology of lakes and streams.

Repealing the sulfate standard because it is unpopular with area industries that emit sulfates dangerously and unfairly jeopardizes the viability of this plant and crop in Minnesota. That is not acceptable for the water nor the people who depend on it.

Minnesota tribes maintain treaty rights to harvest wild rice and work hard to protect the lakes and wetlands it grows on. Wild rice lies at the heart of Ojibwe culture as a source of food, spiritual sustenance and economic activity.

Minnesota should maintain the evidence-based standard on sulfates – to protect the communities who rely on the wild rice and who would otherwise have to live with the impacts of high sulfate levels.

 Please vote no on SF 2983.

Steve Morse
Minnesota Environmental Partnership

	Honor the Earth
Alliance for Sustainability	Izaak Walton League – Minnesota Division
Clean Water Action	League of Women Voters Minnesota
Environment Minnesota	MN Center for Environmental Advocacy
Friends of Minnesota Scientific & Natural Areas	Minnesota Native Plant Society
Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness	Save Our Sky Blue Waters
Friends of the Mississippi River	Wilderness in the City