



STATE OF MINNESOTA

Office of Governor Mark Dayton

130 State Capitol ♦ 75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd ♦ Saint Paul, MN 55155-1611

May 21, 2018

The Honorable Kurt Daudt
Speaker of the House
463 State Office Building
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear Mr. Speaker:

I have vetoed and am returning Chapter 190, HF4133, the Agriculture Policy bill.

I am appalled that the Agriculture Policy Committee Chairs, Representative Paul Anderson and Senator Bill Weber, invoked Minnesota Statute 14.126 and passed resolutions attempting to prohibit the Department of Agriculture from adopting the Groundwater Protection Rule, in order to try to force my signature on this bill. This action was unprecedented and offensive. By adopting the resolutions, the Chairs interfered with the rights of Minnesotans, particularly people living in rural areas, to clean and safe drinking water. However, I refuse to sign away the rights.

The current soil loss law protects farmers' property rights by creating a practical process to deal with issues of excessive erosion from neighbors' lands and to achieve resolutions without going to court. The Legislature could have chosen to send me an Agriculture Policy bill that I could sign. By not doing so, the Legislature missed the opportunity to pass the following bipartisan-supported policies into law:

- **Beginning Farmer Tax Credit Revision-** This policy would have waived the education requirement for beginning farmers who have already received agricultural education through a degree program or other programs like the Farm Business Management.
- **Changes to the Rural Finance Authority Program** – In the current time of depressed commodity prices and an uncertain agriculture trade environment, the proposed changes to the RFA's loan programs would have better served farmers by expanding: the loan programs to farmers experiencing disaster and emergency, loan limits for the livestock expansion and farm opportunity loans, and use of loan programs for methane digesters.
- **Agriculture Best Management Practice Loan Program-** The policy would have made local public drainage ditch authorities eligible for Ag BMP Loans to provide low-cost financing options for buffer implementation after redetermination of benefits.

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- **Aquaculture Industry-** The policy would have classified and created regulatory expectations for aquatic farms and facilities to help the shrimp industry establish and flourish in rural Minnesota.

It is my strong belief that farmers are good stewards of their lands. I also firmly believe that all farmers deserve the right to protect their property. It is unfortunate that the Legislature has attempted to reverse the soil loss law that was designed to prevent landowner-to-landowner conflicts.

For the above reasons, I have vetoed this bill.

Sincerely,



Mark Dayton
Governor

cc: Senator Paul E. Gazelka, Senate Majority Leader
Senator Thomas M. Bakk, Senate Minority Leader
Senator Michelle Fischbach, President of the Senate
Senator Bill Weber, Chief Senate Author
Representative Melissa Hortman, House Minority Leader
Representative Paul Anderson, Chief House Author
The Honorable Steve Simon, Secretary of State
Mr. Cal Ludeman, Secretary of the Senate
Mr. Patrick Murphy, Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives
Mr. Paul Marinac, Revisor of Statutes