



Our mission is to protect and improve the environment and human health.

July 6, 2021

Governor Tim Walz and Lieutenant Governor Peggy Flanagan
130 State Capitol
75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Governor Walz and Lieutenant Governor Flanagan,

It has been my honor to serve as the Commissioner of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and as a trusted member of your Cabinet for the past two and a half years. It is with gratitude and regret that I submit my resignation.

The talented team at the MPCA has shown incredible resilience and flexibility, especially during these past 16 months. Upholding the mission to protect and improve the environment and public health is embedded in the heart of each and every employee at the agency using data, science, and a community-focused process that guides their decisions. I am incredibly proud of the employees that work every day to make Minnesota better.

Leading the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) as Commissioner has been the highlight of my career in the private and public sectors. After leaving a successful fifteen-year career with one of Minnesota's leading Fortune 50 corporations, I feel honored to have been part of this Administration. I entered the role eager to understand the concerns of regulated parties, our communities, and Tribal partners and work with you to incorporate those insights to best advance the One Minnesota priorities. From the beginning, I have been guided by my core belief that we can have economic growth and protect the environment.

I traveled across the state and sat at the union hall table with the United Steel Workers in Virginia; visited Cambria's world headquarters in Le Sueur; worked with the City of Luverne on an innovative permit that both protects the water and brought hundreds of new jobs to southwest Minnesota; and toured POET's biorefining facility in Preston that is creating new products including corn-based asphalt and capturing and commoditizing carbon. These experiences and others confirmed my beliefs that our workers and industries are the economic engine of our state, and that we can protect our vital natural resources while growing businesses.

It's also clear that Minnesotans want the MPCA to do everything possible to protect our air, water and land and act with urgency in addressing the climate crisis. I listened to our youth cry out for the Governor and lawmakers to act, had protesters at my home at all hours and worked with our MPCA team to address concerns within our permits and with legislators to propose policy solutions that begin to move us in a direction that addresses environmental justice.

I am especially proud to have served as Chair of the Climate Subcabinet and worked with fellow Commissioners to prioritize and advance our climate change priorities. We can be proud of the numerous successes this legislative session, including advancing clean car standards, climate resiliency grants, energy efficiency improvements for low-income communities, commitments toward ensuring a just transition for workers, investments in soil health, tree and forest health, solar energy, multi-modal transportation and more. Ensuring Minnesota abide by its greenhouse gas reduction commitments established in the bipartisan Next Generation Act Energy goals set in 2007 should not be a partisan endeavor and I applaud your resolve to get Minnesota back on track to meet or exceed this goal.

The MPCA Commissioner is a job that never wins a popularity contest, yet, in my view, is one of the most important roles in the Cabinet. For many, the agency can never go far enough in our protections, while at the same time, a segment of the Republican caucus will always believe the agency goes too far.

As Commissioner, I worked with policymakers on both sides of the aisle. The environment budget we negotiated together this session is representative of this relationship. The agency has worked tirelessly with legislators answering questions and finding solutions. Whether it was PFAS, feedlots, or other issues, we were able to work together, negotiated amendments that addressed concerns of communities, farmers, and industries, and provided added support to local governments.

Personally, I testified before the legislature, representing the MPCA and the Governor, for three full legislative sessions and spent countless hours responding to any phone calls or questions. For two hours last August, I appeared before a joint Senate committee hearing titled “Reviewing the job performance of Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Commissioner Laura Bishop” – the only commissioner to receive such a “review.” I left that committee feeling satisfied that I had answered all questions, understood the remaining concerns of the lawmakers and felt reassured when the Republican chair said she looked forward to continuing to work together. And while the Administration’s policies may not always see eye to eye with Republican lawmakers, there has never been a question related to my job performance or my qualifications.

Thank you for your support and for entrusting me to this role in service to the State of Minnesota. I am grateful for this opportunity.

Sincerely,



Laura Bishop
Commissioner