

July 1, 2015

Governor Mark Dayton
Office of the Governor and Lt. Governor
116 Veterans Service Building
20 W 12th Street
St. Paul, MN 55155

Commissioner Tom Landwehr, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Office of the Commissioner
500 Lafayette Road
St. Paul, MN 55155

Commissioner Dr. Edward Ehlinger, Minnesota Department of Health
Office of the Commissioner
Minnesota Department of Public Health
P.O. BOX 64975
St. Paul, MN 55164

Commissioner John Linc Stine, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
Office of the Commissioner
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
520 Lafayette Road N
St. Paul, MN 55155

RE: Request for Human Health Risk and Human Health Impact Assessments

Dear Governor Dayton, Commissioners:

We appreciate the opportunity to convey our concerns about the potential health effects of copper-nickel sulfide mining in Northeastern Minnesota.

The Minnesota Academy of Family Physicians (MAFP) is the largest medical specialty organization in Minnesota, representing over 3000 family physicians, family medicine residents, and medical students. The House of Delegates is the elected representative body of the MAFP and holds its annual meeting in the spring. Physician delegates, representing every corner of Minnesota, bring forth resolutions promoting patient and public health. These resolutions are discussed, debated and voted upon by the entire House.

On April 15, 2015, The House of Delegates unanimously approved the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED, that the MAFP request that a Human Health Risk Assessment be performed using the most current scientific modeling methods to evaluate the health effects of the by-products of proposed mining projects, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the MAFP supports the subsequent completion of a Human Health Impact Assessment for mining projects so that both health professionals and the public can make informed decisions.

With the adoption of this resolution, the MAFP joins its voice to those of the Minnesota Medical Association (MMA), Minnesota Nurses Association (MNA), Minnesota Public Health Association (MPHA) and Dr. Edward Ehlinger and the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) in requesting that the health impacts of sulfide mining be analyzed and addressed.

Human Health Risk and Health Impact Assessments have not been completed for the PolyMet NorthMet Project. As physicians, our priorities are the health of our patients and the communities we serve. We must be proactive in asking, "How will PolyMet's NorthMet Project affect the long-term health of our patients and communities?" Health Risk and Health Impact Assessments are needed to answer these questions.

Dr. Ehlinger stated in the comments he submitted on behalf of the MDH, "Health starts where we live, learn, work and play. To create and maintain healthy Minnesota communities, we have to think in terms of health in all policies." We urge you to consider completing health risk and health impact assessments for the PolyMet NorthMet Project and those to follow.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

M. Tariq Fareed
President, MAFP