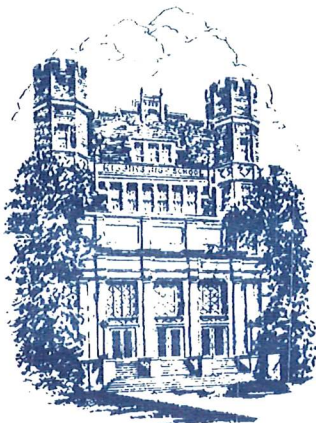




Hibbing Public Schools

Independent School District No. 701

800 East 21st Street • Hibbing, Minnesota 55746
218-208-0848 Fax: 218-208-0866

Richard B. Aldrich, Superintendent

richard.aldrich@isd701.org

September 19, 2025

Commissioner Katrina Kessler
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
520 Lafayette Road North
St. Paul, MN 55155

Re: Comments on Draft Wastewater Permits and Preliminary Denial of Sulfate Variance Request for U.S. Steel Keetac Facility

Dear Commissioner Kessler:

I am writing to express my support for the mining industry in our region and to highlight the important role it plays in the stability of our local public education system, our economy and most importantly student enrollment at our public schools.

The Hibbing Public Schools recently celebrated 100 years of service to our community, region, and the students we serve. This proud tradition is directly reflected in the investments mining has made in our region. Iron ore is the backbone of our community.

We have seen booms and busts in mining during these 100 years. Most recently, we are feeling the effects of fewer mining jobs in our region, and resulting declining student enrollment. Recent announcements from Hibbing Taconite about ore life have left our school district reeling.

Sulfate concerns and decisions at Keetac, which is located within the Hibbing School District's boundaries, will have lasting consequences for other regional mining entities and will lead to additional student loss in our school district.

Thank you for your consideration. We appreciate the difficult work you do in balancing environmental concerns with the needs of our community.

Sincerely,

Richard Aldrich
Superintendent