

Subject: NEWS RELEASE: REP. KAHN HAS CONCERNS ABOUT POLYMET PROPOSED NORTHERN MINNESOTA MINE

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Date: 2014-03-11 18:23:48

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State Rep. Phyllis Kahn NEWS RELEASE

Minnesota House of Representatives

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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March 11, 2014

REP. KAHN HAS CONCERNS ABOUT POLYMET PROPOSED NORTHERN MINNESOTA MINE

ST. PAUL – Rep Phyllis Kahn (DFL-Minneapolis) said in a statement on Tuesday that she has serious concerns about PolyMet's proposed open-pit mine and ore processing facility near Hoyt Lakes and Babbitt. While she believes the environmental impact will be significant, her statement stuck to the issue of financial assurance.

Her statement will be part of the public record of review and comment called for by the Department of Natural Resources regarding the controversial proposed copper-nickel mine.

The Canadian mining company has proposed building the first of what could be a series of many copper-nickel mines in the state. The area for the possible mines is just east of the Iron Range north to the edge of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness.

Kahn's statement is:

The scope of the PolyMet NorthMet SDEIS [Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement] is seriously lacking. This is especially the case when the issue of financial assurance is concerned. I have three points:

I. In chapter 3, pages 136 to 138, you list information that includes the preliminary cost estimate of closure. The source cited is "Foth 2013." I've looked at the Foth memo cited in the SDEIS. The Minnesota DNR has simply copied information from PolyMet's hired consultant without confirming or fact-checking their work. If the Minnesota DNR and its co-lead agencies are unable to fact-check the work they presented on financial assurance, how are we to expect

that they are capable of the adequately protecting the citizens of Minnesota?

II. This project should not go forward unless a third-party insurer, such as Lloyd's of London, can be found. The simple fact is, if a third-party private entity will not take on PolyMet, the state shouldn't. Private insurers have expertise in managing risk that the State of Minnesota can't match. Additionally, policymakers could tap the assurance funds for other purposes. Private insurance is clearly superior to a state managed approach in this case.

III. In the SDEIS you say that financial assurance will be done in the Permit to Mine stage. Looking at the most recent MinnTac Permit to Mine document, there is one short paragraph on financial assurance. This project shouldn't go forward without robust public debate, and the opportunity for legislative hearings, if what we can expect is a paragraph from the DNR in the Permit to Mine phase. You must ensure that the public, including financial experts and those elected to represent the citizens of Minnesota, have a chance to weigh in on financial assurance. It has not been your practice to do so in the past; will it be in this case?

The 90-day public comment period on the proposal closes on Thursday, March 13. Rep. Kahn encourages people to submit their comments via e-mail to: NorthMetSDEIS.dnr@state.mn.us.

Or by US Mail to

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