

**SENATE  
STATE OF MINNESOTA  
NINETY-FOURTH SESSION**

**S.R. No. 29**

(SENATE AUTHORS: PAPPAS)

DATE  
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Introduction

OFFICIAL STATUS

1.1 A Senate resolution

1.2 criminalizing ecocide in the State of Minnesota.

1.3 **WHEREAS**, the United States sprayed 20,000,000 gallons of the chemical Agent Orange

1.4 in Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos during the Vietnam War; and

1.5 **WHEREAS**, Agent Orange defoliated the jungles and caused cancers, neurological diseases,

1.6 and birth defects in at least 3,000,000 people; and

1.7 **WHEREAS**, Dr. Arthur Galston, a biologist at Yale University, labeled this destruction

1.8 "ecocide," a word combining the Greek "oikos," meaning "home," and the Latin "cidere," meaning

1.9 "to kill," creating the new word ecocide, meaning "to kill our home"; and

1.10 **WHEREAS**, ecocide is defined as "unlawful or wanton acts committed with knowledge that

1.11 there is a substantial likelihood of severe and either widespread or long-term damage to the

1.12 environment being caused by those acts"; and

1.13 **WHEREAS**, examples of ecocide today include the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in 2010 off

1.14 the coast of Louisiana; deforestation of the Amazon rainforest; the Alberta Tar Sands project, known

1.15 as the most damaging project on the planet; destruction of worldwide coral reefs; fracking;

1.16 exploitation of the Niger Delta; and the bombing of the Kakhovka Dam in Ukraine; and

1.17 **WHEREAS**, there is increasing legal recognition at the global level of ecocide as a human

1.18 rights crime of the same magnitude and gravity as the crime of genocide; and

1.19 **WHEREAS**, the European Parliament, the International Court of Justice, and the International

1.20 Criminal Court have all criminalized ecocide with laws to hold major perpetrators financially

1.21 responsible for the human and natural damages; and

1.22 **WHEREAS**, 700,000,000 people worldwide and 13,000,000 people in the United States

1.23 will be displaced by environmental disasters by the year 2050; and

2.1           **WHEREAS**, in 2024, 11,500 people were killed by climate disasters and 148,000,000 people  
2.2 were affected by climate crises, numbers which are expected to rise annually; and

2.3           **WHEREAS**, it is scientifically documented that the climate crisis is caused by the warming  
2.4 and rising of the seas, which constitute 71 percent of the surface of the planet, and that this warming  
2.5 and rising leads to increasingly fierce storms, droughts, and floods; and

2.6           **WHEREAS**, the United States Department of Defense has created Climate Adaptation Plans  
2.7 and stated that climate change is a threat multiplier with grave implications for United States defense  
2.8 and global security because of increasing competition to access food, water, shelter, and other  
2.9 life-sustaining resources; and

2.10          **WHEREAS**, at state legislatures in the United States, there is increasing legal recognition  
2.11 of ecocide as a crime, including passage of laws in Vermont and New York and pending legislation  
2.12 in several other states; and

2.13          **WHEREAS**, from 1980 to 2024, there were 61 confirmed environmental disasters in  
2.14 Minnesota that cost the state at least \$1,000,000,000 each and occurred at an average of 1.3 events  
2.15 a year; and

2.16          **WHEREAS**, from 2019 to 2023, the most recent data on record, the rate of disasters in  
2.17 Minnesota that cost at least \$1,000,000,000 each increased to four events a year; and

2.18          **WHEREAS**, the cost of mitigation, reconstruction, repair, and prevention of climate crises  
2.19 is currently borne by taxpayers; and

2.20          **WHEREAS**, the responsibility to mitigate, reconstruct, repair, and prevent environmental  
2.21 damage in Minnesota must be borne by and paid by the entities most culpable; and

2.22          **WHEREAS**, laws to end impunity for perpetrators of ecocide will deter future malfeasance  
2.23 and encourage positive actions; and

2.24          **WHEREAS**, ending impunity for ecocide in Minnesota will reduce harms that  
2.25 disproportionately affect Indigenous, rural, and minority populations; and

2.26          **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Senate of the State of Minnesota that it  
2.27 proclaims the month of April Ecocide Awareness and Prevention Month, and encourages programs  
2.28 and public engagement to prevent environmental degradation, which is a threat multiplier of violence  
2.29 and harm.

Tom Bottern  
Secretary of the Senate

Erin P. Murphy  
Chair, Senate Committee on  
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