

April 7, 2022

Senate Finance Committee
The Honorable Julie Rosen, Chair
2113 Minnesota Senate Building
95 University Avenue W
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Rosen and Finance Committee Members,

I write to provide input from the Department of Commerce on the current version of the Energy and Utilities Committee's omnibus bill. I appreciate the work of Senator Senjem and the Energy Committee staff in developing this proposal. I am pleased that we have shared goals in prioritizing renewable energy, and that Solar for Schools funding was included.

I request your consideration of several important items that were not included. In particular, the \$20 million for state competitiveness fund which was in the Governor's budget and does not appear in this bill. The Federal Infrastructure Act passed last year will allocate hundreds of millions of Federal toolbars to states, utilities, communities across the state. The Administration's State Competitiveness Fund will provide funds to meet required matching contributions and short-term capacity needs to help businesses, the state and communities across Minnesota compete for the opportunities created by this law. Our state will be left behind unless we are prepared with the funds necessary to seize this historic opportunity.

I also request your consideration for the inclusion of the Governor's budget recommendation of an additional \$58.5 million for the Weatherization Assistance Program. These funds would lower energy bills for up to 15,000 income-eligible Minnesotans by making their homes more energy-efficient and safe. As you may know, the Weatherization Assistance Program helps Minnesotans permanently lower their energy bills by as much as 30%, improves safety and health, and reduces demands on our state's overall energy infrastructure.

We look forward to the opportunity to discuss these issues with you and stakeholders as this process moves forward. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Grace Arnold
Commissioner