



Minnesota Rural Electric Association



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April 4, 2022

Senator Scott Newman, Chair
Senator Scott Dibble, Ranking Minority Lead
Members of the Transportation Finance and Policy Committee

RE: SF 1154 and Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure

Dear Chair Newman, Senator Dibble and members of the committee,

The Minnesota Rural Electric Association (MREA) is the statewide association representing the interests of all 50 of Minnesota's non-profit rural electric cooperatives – which are owned by their members, governed by their members, and operate solely for the benefit of their 1.7 million members around the state and the communities in which they live.

We want to thank Chair Newman for including Article 2, section 3 in the Senate Transportation Omnibus, providing guidance for the build out of public electric vehicle chargers under the Federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. We especially appreciate the provision on lines 18.18 to 18.20 of the A-9 amendment, requiring regional balance in the use of IIJA funds for this purpose. In our conversations with policy makers on the use of IIJA funds for public EV chargers, we are urging that the vast majority of these funds be used to provide EV charging in rural Minnesota. Range anxiety is a significant barrier to further EV penetration in Minnesota. EV owners must be confident that they can fuel their vehicles anywhere in the state.

At the same time, we would like to raise a concern with the provision on lines 18.12 to 18.14 of the A-9 amendment, specifying that only non-state sources may be used for the non-federal match for IIJA funds. Rural electric cooperatives are engaged with the state and seeking options to partner in delivering solutions that will alleviate range anxiety by deploying chargers across rural Minnesota. There are numerous reasons cooperatives would make excellent partners in this endeavor. As non-profit and community owned entities, we are grappling with the significant challenge of attempting to do

so while protecting rural Minnesotans from paying higher electricity rates. Some level of state funding provided for this purpose is a potential remedy allowing for the participation of rural electric cooperatives without saddling electric cooperative member-owners with undue costs. As always, we are open to discussing potential approaches that may help achieve our mutual goals.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment, and for all your work on behalf of Minnesotans.

Sincerely,

s/Mike Bull

Mike Bull, Director
Policy and Regulatory Affairs