

February 24, 2023

Senator Nick Frentz
Chair - Energy, Utilities, Environment, and Climate Committee
Minnesota Senate Bldg.
95 University Avenue W.
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Frentz and committee members,

My name is Robert Backman. I live in rural Becker County and am retired. I write today in support of SF 1783, an appropriation for the Clean Energy Resource Teams (CERTs).

In retirement I sought out organizations to support and spend my time with that contribute in an effective and efficient way to the wellbeing and future of Minnesota, my life long home. As a result I ended up on a CERTs working group in NW Minnesota. In the past seven years I have seen CERTs undertake projects that will ensure my grandchildren live in a better Minnesota. I am proud to tell my neighbors and friends I am associated with CERTs.

Last fall my local chapter of the Izaak Walton League conducted a regional Electric Vehicle (EV) event in Detroit Lakes. CERTs staff served on our planning committee and contributed their expertise in the design of the event and as a result it was successful beyond our greatest expectations. In addition to their planning assistance their NW Director worked all day at the Saturday event. CERTs was a significant reason why program evaluations and local media reports had high praise along with calls for another event next year.

CERTs staff and resources are making a real difference in our state, helping increase our energy efficiency and move us towards a clean energy future. SF1783 will increase CERTs reach and impact.

As a volunteer I have witnessed over my seven years their passion and drive to help Minnesota move towards an energy future that we all want. CERTs work with local communities not as experts from some distant remote agency but as true local partners that help us meet our own local clean energy goals. Additional funding for CERTs is a wise investment for our state's future.

Please support SF 1783

Robert Backman
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