

March 1, 2023

Dear members of the Senate Energy, Utilities, Environment and Climate Committee,

My name is Sam Olbekson. I am an enrolled member of the White Earth Nation of Minnesota Ojibwe and am serving as the 2023 president of the American Institute of Architects Minnesota. On behalf of our more than 2,300 architects and design professionals, I am writing in support of Senate File 1759, which sets energy use reduction goals for existing residential and commercial buildings.

Constructing a new building has a significant impact on climate and carbon, so it is critical we do what we can to extend the functional lives of those we already have. By creating standards that set goals for existing buildings, we can encourage building operators and homeowners to renovate and update for energy efficiency, which will not only help reduce the climate impact of those buildings but is also likely to result in life cycle cost savings.

We hope that policies like this will be supported by programs that offer technical and financial support to homeowners and building operators to incentivize them to make updates to improve their energy efficiency. We are happy to see other bills moving this session that would provide some of those kinds of incentives and also capitalize on the federal funds available for these kinds of efforts.

Minnesota's architects appreciate the work you're doing this session to address the climate crisis and we respectfully ask you to support Senate File 1759.

Sincerely,



Sam Olbekson, AIA, AICAE, NOMA
President, AIA Minnesota
Founder and CEO, Full Circle Indigenous Planning + Design

cc: Senator Zaynab Mohamed