

March 8, 2023

Dear Chair Frentz, Vice Chair Xiong, Senator Mathews and Minnesota Senate Energy, Utilities, Environment, and Climate Committee Members:

On behalf of the 29,000 members and family members of Laborers' International Union of North America (LIUNA) Minnesota and North Dakota, I am writing to express our support for the SF 1834, which will facilitate timely approval of critical investments that are designed to make our electric and gas infrastructure more resilient and safer while reducing greenhouse gas emissions and creating thousands of family-supporting jobs..

LIUNA members are proud to build and maintain our state's transportation, water, energy, and building infrastructure. We recognize the need to rapidly reduce energy sector greenhouse gas emissions in order to tackle climate change, and have helped to lead legislative efforts to accomplish this objective through the 100% Clean Energy Act and the Natural Gas Innovation Act.

Now that the State of Minnesota has set a policy direction for energy sector greenhouse gas reduction, however, we need to provide utilities and the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission which oversees them the tools needed to get the job done. By clarifying the process for approving investments needed to reduce emissions while maintaining reliability, SF 1834 can be one such tool.

First, SF 1834 updates existing Renewable Energy Standard rate rider and statutory language governing transmission planning to streamline approval of renewable generation and transmission investments needed to meet the renewable and carbon-free goals set out in the 100% clean energy law. In order to achieve these ambitious targets, we need to deploy new generation and transmission as quickly and affordably as we can.

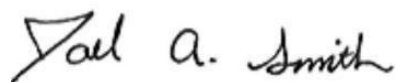
We have already seen instances where delays in approving projects have resulted in significant cost increases, and such circumstances will become more frequent as utilities seek to navigate market constraints that include tight supply chains and a lack of adequate transmission. SF 1834 will help to clarify the criteria the Commission should use to approve investments and the process utilities should use to recover costs. SF 1834 will also support meeting Minnesota's 100% carbon free requirement by avoiding unnecessary and potentially costly delays in the extension of existing nuclear plant operations that are a vital source of carbon-free energy and high-quality jobs for members.

Second, SF 1834 extends the existing Gas Utility Infrastructure Cost rider by five years, which will allow utilities to continue accelerated replacement of aging gas pipelines. Construction and maintenance of gas utility infrastructure provides steady, family-supporting work for more than 1,000 LIUNA members across Minnesota. The GUIC program has allowed many of those members to put their skills to work on projects that reduce harmful methane emissions and make the gas system safer and more resilient.

We thank Senator Xiong for introducing this legislation and urge the committee's support..

Thank you for your consideration.

In Solidarity,



Joel Smith
President and Business Manager
LIUNA Minnesota and North Dakota