



Midwest clean energy accelerator
focused on demonstrating and
scaling innovative solutions for
northern climates

Honorable Nick Frentz
Chair
Senate Energy, Utilities, Environment and Climate Committee
3109 Minnesota Senate Building

House File 2147
Honorable Patty Acomb
Chair
House Climate and Energy Finance and Policy Committee
593 State Office Building

SF 2462 – Support for Funding of the Center for Microgrid Research

Dear Chair Frentz, Chair Acomb, and Committee Members,

I am writing in support of Senate File 2462, legislation to authorize funding from the State of Minnesota's Renewable Development Account for the Center for Microgrid Research at the University of St. Thomas.

Through Grid Catalyst, Minnesota's clean energy accelerator program, we are working to accelerate clean energy innovation and deployment, by connecting entrepreneurs to project demonstration, mentorship and development, and investments to grow their business. Our program enables pathways for entrepreneurs and emerging technology, by matching projects to established institutions who can test, verify, and advance these technologies into the marketplace.

Without a national lab serving our region, we are incredibly fortunate to have the Center for Microgrid Research (the Center) as a testing ground for these technologies and emerging businesses. As well as a hub for educating the next generation of talent that will transform our energy system. The Center is one of the only microgrid research and educational facilities in the entire country—and the only such facility in the Midwest. The Center's work represents an essential component we must have to ensure the overall health of our power grid, to reduce vulnerability, to increase efficiency, and to support innovative new technologies.

As the country's dependence on distributed energy resources accelerates, the ability of my organization to partner with the Center and to call upon their expertise will play an increasingly critical role in developing new solutions and training the skilled workforce that is essential to our regional economy and energy system. Looking forward, we are counting on the Center as a regional asset and collaborative partner to demonstrate and refine emerging technologies,

while providing hands-on learning experiences for students and future innovators. This is essential for our vision of Minnesota as a cleantech and energy innovation hub and to attract talent, funding, and new opportunities to our region.

I urge your support for this critical investment in our state's economic and energy future.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Nina Axelson

Nina Axelson
President and Founder
Grid Catalyst