

RE: Testimony regarding SF2462

Chair Frentz and Committee Members,

A Connexus Energy Distribution Systems Engineer, Erica Schmidt, is a graduate of the engineering school that includes the Center for Microgrid Research. Last week, her schedule allowed her to attend the House committee hearing of SF2462's companion bill, where she shared her experience:

“I grew up in Maplewood and graduated from Roseville High where my favorite subject was physics. From there I majored in Math and Physics at university, transferring to the University of Minnesota to major in Electrical Engineering. I knew I wanted to work in the power industry and applied for a role at Connexus Energy. After two years of gaining experience on the job at Connexus, I decided I wanted to learn more. In spring of 2019, I applied to a graduate-level program at the Center for Microgrid Research, interested in the Electric Vehicles major and Power Systems. The training I received from Dr. Kabalan and his colleagues at the Center has been extremely valuable in my work and professional advancement.

“As you've heard previously, Connexus is now into our 5th year of operating 15 MWs of battery storage coupled with 10 MW of solar. This application, as well as numerous other distribution design elements in our grid, helps Connexus maintain electric service reliability—for the fifth year in a row—in the top 5% of all utilities nationwide, while also maintaining competitive rates.

“The accelerating energy transition requires recognition of the unique regional asset we have in Dr. Kabalan and his colleagues, as well as their dedication and skill to inspire and train engineers like me. For Minnesota, and all its utilities, advanced workforce development is a critical component of our changing grid.”

Thank you for your consideration of SF 2462.

Sincerely,

Rob Davis  
Public Affairs, Programs, and Media Relations