



AN ALLETE COMPANY

ALLETE / MN Power
30 W Superior Street
Duluth, MN 55802

March 18, 2024

RE: S.F. 4373

Senator Nick Frentz, Chair
Senate Energy, Utilities, Environment and Climate Committee
St. Paul, MN 55103

Dear Chair Frentz and members of the Committee,

On behalf of Minnesota Power, a Duluth-based investor-owned electric utility serving 150,000 customers and some of the nation's largest industrial customers, we write to provide input for S.F. 4373. We are concerned that the opt-in component of the legislation will unnecessarily burden and delay future installation of smart meter gateways and risk the inherent advantages of this technology for customers and utilities.

Although our existing infrastructure includes smart meters and not smart meter gateways, we believe gateway technologies present an important step to help utilities more efficiently manage the power grid.

Smart meters improve communication between an energy consumer and the utility. The technology allows customers to gain timely access to their own energy usage, enables future rate design optimizations including Time-of-Day and Dual Fuel rates, and provides advanced monitoring to isolate power outages and surges. Without installation of this equipment, our technicians would also need to physically visit households or businesses, adding overall cost and time to action.

Smart meter gateways are the next step for enhanced networks. As electrification continues, gateways will be a vital part of the solution towards addressing growing electric loads, particularly through interactive options with customers. For these reasons, we remain concerned with S.F. 4373.

Sincerely,

Zach Martin
Manager of Government Affairs
ALLETE / MN Power