

Minneapolis Health Department 505 4th Ave S, Room 520 Minneapolis, MN 55415 TEL 612.673.2301

March 13, 2024

Dear Chair Wiklund and the Health and Human Services Committee Members,

On behalf of the City of Minneapolis I am writing in support of SF 4074, a bill proposing changes to permitting requirements for groundwater thermal exchange devices. This amendment is crucial for development of low-carbon district energy systems using technology such as Aquifer Thermal Energy Storage (ATES) systems which will help meet our state goals for climate resiliency and energy efficacy.

The ATES system is being investigate for use by Redesign Inc. for a project in the Longfellow community in Minneapolis for implementation of a sustainable and affordable heating and cooling system to pair with the redevelopment of the former U.S. Bank site on E Lake Street and 28th Ave S. Redesign Inc. is a non-profit community development corporation serving five neighborhoods of Greater Longfellow in Minneapolis since 1969

This is a huge opportunity to establish the first ATES system of the United States in Minnesota, particularly in the Longfellow community in Minneapolis. Together this will be a commitment to rebuilding neighborhoods and reducing environmental impacts in the community centering BIPOC voices in the process. An important component of the site's reduced environmental impact will be a low-carbon district energy system using ATES. This is the most practical option for decarbonization, given the footprint of the site.

The ATES systems rely on a series of wells and piping systems utilizing below ground conditions to take advantage of the energy and energy storage potential contained in an aquifer. This allows for buildings to be heated and cooled without relying on fossil fuels such as natural gas. This will not only benefit the communities served, but it will also help the City of Minneapolis and the State of Minnesota achieve its building decarbonization and energy efficiency goals.

The purpose of SF 4074 is to enable the permitting of this innovative geo-exchange technology which will in turn help Minnesota obtain its climate goals.

Sincerely,

Patrick Halon Deputy Commissioner Health Sustainability, Health Homes, and Environment