



March 5, 2024

Minnesota State Senate  
Higher Education Committee  
Capitol Room G-15  
Saint Paul, MN 55155

RE: Senate File 4226 / House File 4175 - Eligibility and inclusion of the energy sector in the Workforce Development Scholarship at Minnesota State Colleges and Universities

Dear Chair Fateh and Chair Pelowski and committee members,

Clean Energy Economy MN (CEEM), Ceres, Clean Grid Alliance [CGA], and the undersigned clean energy businesses write today in support of Senate File 4226 / House File 4175, which adds the energy sector as an eligible program of study or certification for the \$2,500 Workforce Development Scholarship within the Minnesota State system. Investing in policies supporting energy jobs will expand Minnesota's economy and contribute to overcoming the energy efficiency and clean energy sector workforce development challenges. This policy change also invests in the foundation upon how we will achieve carbon-free electricity by 2040.

Today, almost 60,000 Minnesotans work in clean energy jobs, and they grew 50% faster than Minnesota's overall job growth in 2022<sup>1</sup>. However, there is still more work to be done to continue improving the equity in the clean energy economy and grow Minnesota's clean energy jobs. The 2023 U.S. Energy & Employment report found that 82% of energy employers have expressed difficulty in hiring. Although Minnesota's clean energy employers are working hard to inspire students of all ages, including creating in-house training opportunities and encouraging career pathways through technical education, they are still experiencing limitations in finding well-trained, qualified, and local people to fill needed jobs.

Including energy as part of the Workforce Development Scholarship Program at Minnesota State schools will allow students to pursue much-needed careers in the energy sector and enable significant economic and job growth opportunities in Minnesota. This will help Minnesota solidify its leadership position in the Midwest as a clean energy powerhouse.

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<sup>1</sup> 2023 Clean Jobs Midwest Report: <https://www.cleanenergyeconomymn.org/clean-jobs-midwest>

Thank you for the opportunity to share our support for SF4226/HF4175. If you have any questions, please let us know.

Sincerely,



Design Right Energy, LLC

