



March 21, 2024

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

RE: Senate File 4003 - Higher Education Policy Omnibus

Dear Chair Fateh and committee members,

Clean Energy Economy MN (CEEM), Ceres, Clean Grid Alliance (CGA) and the undersigned clean energy businesses, write today in support of the inclusion of the addition of the energy sector as an eligible program of study or certification for the \$2,500 Workforce Development Scholarship within the Minnesota State system included in the Higher Education Policy Omnibus, Senate File 4003. 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 2022¹. 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.

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

Thank you for the opportunity to share our support for including the energy sector as an eligible program for the Workforce Development Scholarship. If you have any questions, please let us know.

Sincerely,



Design Right Energy, LLC

