



March 21, 2025

RE: Local Government Support for Senate File 2454: Appropriating money for geothermal planning grants.

Honorable Members of the Senate Energy, Utilities, Environment and Climate Committee,

I am writing in strong support of Senate File 2454, which would increase appropriations for the local government geothermal planning grant program. This bill represents an opportunity to enable local governments to pursue geothermal energy projects that can provide multiple public benefits, including increased energy efficiency, cleaner indoor air quality, and reduced energy costs over time.

The City of Saint Paul is eager to explore and implement geothermal energy projects in our community, but the high upfront costs associated with planning and project development remain a significant barrier. Increasing appropriations for this grant program will provide critical funding to help local governments overcome some of these financial challenges and move forward with projects.

Importantly, this bill supports an existing program that has already demonstrated strong interest — more than \$2.5 million was requested for the current \$1.2 million program. The program is limited in its ability to more broadly and effectively support local governments with current funding levels. Expanding and continuing this program will allow more communities in Minnesota to access technical assistance and financial support, while ensuring the benefits of this technology are shared across the state. This type of investment strengthens local resilience while supporting local energy goals.

Finally, the current program does not list Tribal Governments as eligible recipients. We encourage the committee to consider including the eleven federally recognized tribes in this bill.

We urge you to support SF 2454 to ensure more local and tribal governments have the resources needed to pursue geothermal energy projects. Thank you for your leadership and commitment to supporting the advancement of sustainable energy solutions in our communities.

Sincerely,

Melvin Carter
Mayor, City of Saint Paul