



April 22, 2020

Representative Jean Wagenius
449 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

RE: Support for Energy Conservation and Optimization (“ECO”) Act (HF4502/SF4409)

Dear Chair Wagenius and Committee Members:

Minnesota Power is writing to express support for the Energy Conservation and Optimization Act of 2020 (commonly referred to as “ECO Act”). We are an investor-owned utility with a strong performance record of exceeding the current Conservation Improvement Program (“CIP”) energy-savings goal since its inception. We are confident that the ECO Act builds on the strong foundation established in CIP while providing a more comprehensive platform to further the energy policy objectives of the state through broader program offerings that consider not only energy consumption, but the timing of that consumption and how it aligns with an increasingly renewable energy mix.

The ECO Act is a timely evolution of long-standing energy conservation goals that includes provisions for utilities to further empower customers to make choices about their energy usage and related investment decisions to best meet the needs of their homes or businesses. It provides opportunities for customers through load management and efficient fuel-switching, while also maintaining an important focus on cost-effectiveness from multiple perspectives – utility, customer, and society; balancing objectives with low-income needs; continuing to spur technical innovation; and providing for a regulatory framework that ensures both protections and flexibility.

As someone who currently leads customer experience operations and who has been responsible for the design, delivery, and evaluation of our energy conservation programs, I can attest to the importance of allowing for comprehensive program offerings. Minnesota Power is on pace to deliver half of our energy from renewable sources next year and we view energy efficiency, load management, and beneficial electrification as important elements as we strive to provide safe, reliable and affordable energy to our communities, homes, and businesses in the midst of significant energy transition. To that end, Minnesota Power encourages you to support this bill.

Sincerely,

Tina S. Koecher
Manager – Customer Experience Operations
Minnesota Power