

May 11, 2022

The Honorable Senator Eric R. Pratt
Chair, Jobs and Economic Growth Finance and Policy
Minnesota Senate Bldg., Room 3219
St. Paul, MN 55155

The Honorable Representative Mohamud Noor
Chair, Workforce and Business Development Finance and Policy Division
379 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Conference Committee Members,

I write to provide input from the Department of Commerce on the current version of the Jobs, Energy and Commerce Policy and Supplemental Appropriations omnibus bill. I appreciate the work of Senator Senjem, Representative Long and the Energy Committees staff in developing this proposal. I am pleased that we have shared goals in prioritizing renewable energy, and that Solar for Schools funding was included.

I request your consideration of several important items that were not included. In particular, the \$20 million for state competitiveness fund which was in the Governor's budget and does not appear in this bill. The Federal Infrastructure Act passed last year will allocate hundreds of millions of Federal toolbars to states, utilities, communities across the state. The Administration's State Competitiveness Fund will provide funds to meet required matching contributions and short-term capacity needs to help businesses, the state and communities across Minnesota compete for the opportunities created by this law. Our state will be left behind unless we are prepared with the funds necessary to seize this historic opportunity.

I also request your consideration for the inclusion of the Governor's budget recommendation of an additional \$58.5 million for the Weatherization Assistance Program. These funds would lower energy bills for up to 15,000 income-eligible Minnesotans by making their homes more energy-efficient and safe. As you may know, the Weatherization Assistance Program helps Minnesotans permanently lower their energy bills by as much as 30%, improves safety and health, and reduces demands on our state's overall energy infrastructure.

I also request your consideration of the non-energy related Governor's budget recommendations contained in the House Jobs, Energy and Commerce Omnibus bill.

We look forward to the opportunity to discuss these issues in this conference committee as this process moves forward. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Grace Arnold
Commissioner