



**H.F. XX Intervenor Compensation (Rep. Hollins)**  
**H.F. XX Interconnection Incentives (Rep. Lippert)**  
**H.F. XX Next Generation Climate Act (Rep. Acomb)**

**February 16, 2021**

Dear Members of the House Climate and Energy Committee,

The Minnesota Chamber of Commerce appreciates the opportunity to comment on the committee's agenda. We believe in the triple goal of affordable, reliable and cleaner energy, and the Minnesota Chamber works hard to help the 6,300 businesses we represent across our state reduce their energy consumption, divert waste, and minimize environmental impact.

The Minnesota Chamber also strongly supports our members who have sustainability and clean energy plans that go beyond any state mandate. Whether it's reducing carbon emissions in their own operations, making more sustainable products, or helping their suppliers and customers do the same, ambitious plans to reduce environmental impact are real and ongoing.

With respect to the above referenced legislation, the Minnesota Chamber is concerned about adding new costs into utility customer bills at a time when electric prices have skyrocketed and much economic uncertainty remains as a result of the pandemic. Further, we urge the committee to avoid forcing utility customers to bear new or additional costs when those costs have little or no relation to the fundamental goal of providing reliable and affordable service to all customers inside of a utility's exclusive territory.

**Intervenor Compensation (Rep. Hollins):** This bill would increase the maximum amount of ratepayer-funded compensation an intervenor may receive per proceeding by 50 percent or more. Utility customers could be charged up to \$2.5 million per year for total intervention costs depending on the size of the utility, regardless of whether the costs of the intervention is offset by reduced costs for the utility's customers or whether ratepayer-funded assistance is actually necessary to enable a party to intervene. The need for additional intervention compensation is not clear at this time, and greater ratepayer protections should accompany any increase in permitted compensation.

**Interconnection Incentives (Rep. Lippert):** This bill requires the Public Utilities Commission to design incentives for a utility to increase interconnection ability of non-utility owned resources. Interconnection

and transmission upgrades should be part of a comprehensive, system-wide and region-wide planning process to ensure utility customers receive the greatest value from any investment. This incentive could encourage low-value infrastructure investments that benefit few at the expense of all.

**Next Generation Climate Act (Rep. Acomb):** We encourage the committee to consider the extent to which existing or near-term technology makes this goal feasible, the overall impact investments required to meet it will have on global greenhouse gas emissions, and how programs to facilitate the achievement of this goal will be financed. We also urge the committee to ensure utility ratepayers are not treated as a limitless financing mechanism for legislative policy preferences. Finally, we hope the Legislature will avoid adopting goals which could result in the elimination of products or services where technologically feasible and cost-competitive alternatives do not exist or are not on the near-term horizon.

We encourage policymakers to carefully examine old and new mandates, regulations and other policy preferences to find the lowest cost path to the shared goal of reliable, affordable and cleaner energy.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on this legislation. We welcome the opportunity to work with the committee on solutions.

Sincerely,

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