



March 14, 2022

Minnesota House of Representatives
Workforce and Business Development Finance and Policy Committee
State Office Building
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Re: Support for Launch Minnesota, Angel Tax Credit, and Clean Tech Workforce Training Program

Dear Chair Noor and Committee Members,

On behalf of Clean Energy Economy MN (CEEM), we write today in support of key recommendations contained in the Governor's 2022 Supplemental Budget for the Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED). We support these specific provisions because they enable DEED to deliver critical assistance and programs that help small businesses to innovate and grow while also developing the diverse and skilled workforce necessary to meet the demands of a resilient and cleaner economy.

CEEM is an industry-led, nonprofit organization representing the business voice of clean energy in Minnesota. We work to help educate Minnesotans about the economic benefits of transitioning to a clean energy economy and are committed to growing and strengthening Minnesota's clean energy business ecosystem. Our membership consists of more than 40 clean energy companies ranging from startup businesses to Fortune 100 and 500 corporations that employ thousands of Minnesotans across the state.

Specifically, our organization strongly supports the supplemental budget recommendations proposed to *Enhance Launch Minnesota*, *Invest in the Angel Tax Credit*, and create a *Clean Tech Workforce Training Program*¹. These wise investments will bolster Minnesota's competitiveness and provide vital resources to help entrepreneurs and small businesses develop and bring to market the innovative solutions needed to solve the world's biggest challenges. This funding will also ensure our startup and innovation ecosystem remains vibrant to grow more jobs and expand economic opportunities across the state.

According to our 2021 Clean Jobs Midwest – MN report², over 55,300 Minnesotans work in energy efficiency and the clean energy sector with 71 percent of these jobs in small businesses that employ fewer than 20 people. Nearly 40 percent of clean energy jobs are located in Greater Minnesota. Prior to the pandemic, clean energy jobs were growing nearly twice as fast as jobs in our overall economy. However, 86 percent of clean energy businesses reported hiring very or somewhat difficult. Investing in these valuable DEED programs will provide crucial resources to accelerate and expand business and job growth, attract additional private capital, and prepare our workforce for new employment opportunities in a clean energy economy.

We are grateful for your leadership and work to ensure Minnesota's innovators, entrepreneurs, and small businesses have the resources they need to start, grow, and flourish. We urge you to support these important DEED programs within the Governor's Supplemental Budget Recommendations to further strengthen our start-up, early-stage, and clean energy business community. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

George Damian
Director of Government Affairs
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¹ The Walz Flanagan Budget *To Move Minnesota Forward* https://mn.gov/deed/assets/2022-budget-fact-sheet-acc_tcm1045-516826.pdf

² 2021 Clean Jobs Midwest – MN report <https://www.cleanenergyeconomy.org/clean-jobs-midwest>