

HENNEPIN COUNTY

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

March 18, 2025

Representative Anquam Mahamoud
5th Floor Centennial Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

RE: Hennepin County Support for HF 2162: Appropriating money for geothermal planning grants

Dear Representative Mahamoud:

Thank you for authoring HF 2162, a bill to continue funding for the local government geothermal planning grant program. Hennepin County supports this bill and urges members of the Energy Finance and Policy Committee to pass this legislation. HF 2162 empowers local governments to pursue geothermal energy projects that can provide multiple public benefits including increased energy efficiency, greenhouse gas emissions reduction, cleaner indoor air quality, and reduced energy costs over time.

Geothermal is a key strategy to reach the Net Zero emissions by 2050 goal, which is reflected in Hennepin County's Climate Action Plan as well as in the Minnesota Climate Action Framework. Hennepin County currently has five geothermal projects in use or under construction and has three more projects planned. These projects support critical county services including libraries, service centers, and sheriff headquarters. Specific sites include:

- Emergency Communications Facility (1245 Shenandoah Lane North, Plymouth MN 55447): Completed and in use
- Maple Grove Library (8001 Main St N, Maple Grove, MN 55369): Completed and in use
- Nokomis Library (5100 34th Ave S, Minneapolis, MN 55417): Completed and in use
- Plymouth Library (15700 36th Avenue North Plymouth, MN 55446): Completed and in use
- Sheriff's Public Safety Services Division Headquarters (1345 Shenandoah Lane, Plymouth, MN 55447): Under construction
- Westonka Library (2079 Commerce Blvd, Mound MN 55364): Upcoming project
- Southdale Regional Center (1225 Southdale Center, Edina MN 55435): Upcoming project
- Brookdale Regional Center (6125 Shingle Creek Pkwy, Brooklyn Center, MN 55430): Upcoming project

To further advance this work, we submitted an application for this year's state geothermal planning grant. This application would support \$100,000 to study the technical and economic feasibility of installing geothermal at the 1.5 million square foot Government Center building (HCGC).

HCGC is one of the biggest users of energy from the Hennepin County Energy Center district system, which generates approximately 35,000 metric tonnes of CO2 annually. The results of this study will inform the future replication of geothermal as a solution to decarbonizing HCGC and other buildings served by the Hennepin County Energy Center.

We believe local governments are eager to explore and implement geothermal energy projects in our communities, but the high upfront costs associated with planning and project development remain a significant barrier. Continuing and expanding this grant program will provide critical funding to help local governments overcome some of these financial challenges, move forward with projects, while also supporting energy efficiency, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and supporting long-term energy resilience.

Thank you again for authoring HF 2162 to ensure more local 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,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Irene Fernando". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Irene" and last name "Fernando" clearly distinguishable.

Irene Fernando

Irene Fernando, Chair
Hennepin County Board of Commissioners
300 South Sixth Street, Minneapolis, MN 55487-0040
hennepinD2.com | hennepin.us

