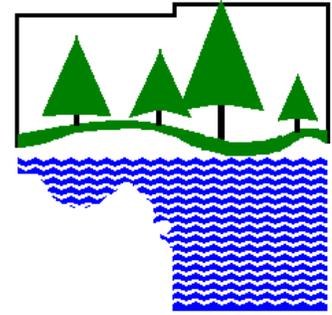


# ITASCA COUNTY

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February 21, 2023

Chair Hodan Hassan  
597 State Office Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155

RE: Support of HF 1398 – Community Energy Transition Grant Program

Mr. Chair and Committee Members,

Thank you for considering this bill that would create a much needed transition aid program for local governments that will lose significant tax base as a result of the retirement of large power plants.

Itasca County is home to the Minnesota Power Boswell Energy Plant located in the City of Cohasset. It provides most of the tax base to Cohasset and is the second largest property tax payer in Itasca County. Through a recent MPCA negotiated decision, we know the latest date coal operations will continue at the power plant – 2035. Even though this may seem like ample time provide for a transition, one can safely assume that replacing this large of tax base will be nigh impossible – as evidenced by the recent decision by Huber to NOT build a plant in Cohasset.

Equally important to replacing the anticipated loss in property tax is finding equitable employment opportunities for any displaced workers. Minnesota Power provides well-paying, family-sustaining employment for our County and we need to continue to invest in our most valued resource – our workforce.

I implore your support of HF 1398 which will provide host communities assistance in the State's energy transition.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brett Skyles".

Brett Skyles, Itasca County Administrator