



DEDICATED TO A STRONG GREATER MINNESOTA

February 14, 2023

Dear Representative Acomb and members of the Climate and Energy Finance and Policy Committee,

I'm reaching out on behalf of the Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities (CGMC) to express our support for H.F. 1656, the Minnesota State Competitiveness Fund legislation. The CGMC is an organization of more than 100 cities located outside the metropolitan area, many of whom are eligible for the grants at the heart of this legislation.

I've personally attended multiple meetings in person and virtually where the impact of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and the Inflation Reduction Act have been discussed. Both pieces of legislation offer many opportunities for our member cities, like my city of Thief River Falls, to build towards a more resilient future for our communities.

At these meetings, I've highlighted the two major challenges with these pieces of legislation: 1) many require a match, which our cities may not have, and 2) the dizzying array of opportunities is difficult for our cities to understand and identify what could work for us. This legislation addresses both of those concerns by providing matching funds and making grants available to organizations like the Regional Development Corporations (RDCs) to assist with identifying opportunities and writing grants.

As a result, the CGMC would like to lend our support to this legislation. We do urge the legislature to ensure that bill language providing funding to organizations like the RDCs goes beyond simply writing grants to allow for planning and the other assistance needed to take advantage of the available opportunities.

We thank you for bringing this legislation forward. If you have any questions, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Brian Holmer
President, Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities
Mayor, Thief River Falls