



February 13, 2025

Chair Josh Heintzeman
House Environment and Natural Resources Finance and Policy Committee
Centennial Office Building
658 Cedar Street, St. Paul, MN 55155

Chair Heintzeman and Committee Members,

I am writing in support of HF 8 on behalf of the Minnesota Conservative Energy Forum (MNCEF), a non-profit education and advocacy organization that promotes an "all-of-the-above" energy strategy for Minnesota. Our organization encourages policymakers to embrace innovations in clean, reliable and affordable energy based on principles such as economic growth, property rights, free markets, personal stewardship, job growth, and national security.

We applaud Chair Heintzeman for building upon the foundation laid by last year's Minnesota Energy Infrastructure Act (MEIA), which made energy permitting more efficient and gave companies who want to invest in Minnesota more predictability and certainty. Last year, Minneapolis hosted the American Clean Power Association's Cleanpower 2024 conference, and all eyes were on Minnesota's permitting reform efforts. The national attention and discussion generated among companies and investors showed just how closely the business community watches these reforms. While the MEIA demonstrated what's possible when stakeholders come together around permitting reform, it was just the beginning. This legislation takes the next essential step by creating a truly technology-neutral approach that benefits all industries requiring environmental permits—from traditional energy to renewables, manufacturing to mining, and everything in between.

The stakes could not be higher. Minnesota is losing substantial investment to neighboring states, with a concerning trend of homegrown companies choosing to expand elsewhere. This exodus affects every sector of our economy, from energy generation and transmission to industrial manufacturing and natural resource development. With the 2040 clean energy mandate now law, streamlining our permitting processes isn't just about one industry or technology—it's about creating an environment where any business can efficiently deploy capital to grow Minnesota's economy.

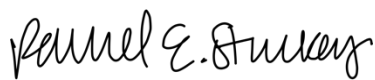
Minnesota has the potential to create something remarkable: a complete circular energy economy. We can mine critical minerals in the north under the highest environmental and labor standards, manufacture energy components in our industrial centers, build projects across the state, and eventually recycle these materials at the end of their useful life – all within our borders. However, this vision remains out of reach as long as our permitting processes drive investment elsewhere.

The current situation presents a striking contradiction. We've committed to ambitious clean energy goals, yet our permitting processes create barriers for all types of energy development, whether it's mining operations for critical minerals, manufacturing facilities for energy components, or the actual energy generation projects themselves. Instead of building on Minnesota's proud mining legacy to support our energy future, we're forcing reliance on materials from foreign adversaries with questionable labor practices and minimal environmental standards.

This legislation's comprehensive approach to permitting reform isn't about weakening environmental standards—it's about making our processes more efficient and predictable while maintaining our high environmental benchmarks. Every industry in Minnesota, from agriculture to manufacturing, energy to mining, benefits when we have clear, consistent, and timely permitting processes. This technology-neutral approach ensures that any project, regardless of its nature, has a fair and efficient path forward.

Minnesota stands at a crossroads. HF 8 offers a path toward a more prosperous future where environmental protection and economic growth work in harmony. By modernizing our permitting processes while maintaining strong oversight, we can unlock opportunities across every sector of our economy. MnCEF looks forward to working together to build a permitting system that strengthens Minnesota's economy while protecting the rich natural beauty and environmental standards we all value.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Rachel E. Stuckey". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rachel Stuckey
Executive Director
Minnesota Conservative Energy Forum