

April 11, 2023

RE: HF 2754

Representative Liz Olson, Chair
House Ways and Means Committee
St. Paul, MN

Dear Representative Olson:

Missouri River Energy Services (MRES) is a municipal joint action agency providing supplemental wholesale power and other services to 61 municipal electric utilities in four states: Iowa, Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota—25 of those 61 member communities are in Minnesota. On behalf of MRES and our 25 municipal electric utility members in Minnesota, we wish to express our concerns with Article 6, section 2 of HF 2754.

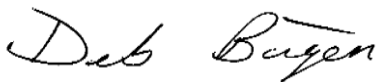
Climate Innovation Finance Authority (Green Bank): Article 6, section 2

First, we would like to thank the bill author for adding consumer-owned utility representation to the Authority's board. Second, we understand and recognize that the author's intent for the Green Bank is to create an entity that would fill a space not already occupied by other entities, utilities, or agencies. However, MRES and its municipal utility members already have robust Conservation Improvement Programs (CIP), Electrification Conservation and Optimization (ECO) programs, and provide custom energy efficiency programs for commercial or industrial customers (key accounts programs). In order to assure that these utility programs are not duplicated or undercut, we urge language be added to require meaningful contact and consultation with the incumbent utility. This could be accomplished by adding language to require contact with the incumbent utility under Subdivision 5 (page 91.10--underserved market analysis). Language similar to that found on page 118.9 of this bill (solar on public buildings) would be amenable.

This proposal would put considerable state investment into the Green Bank program. We urge that meaningful consultation language be added to assure that state funds are directed towards where they are needed, and not used in a duplicative or non-efficient manner.

MRES would like to thank Chair Olson for allowing us to comment on this important bill.

Sincerely,



Deb Birgen
Vice-President, Government Relations