



Center for Energy and Environment

March 12, 2025

Representative Chris Swedzinski
Chair, Energy Finance and Policy Committee
Centennial Office Building, 2nd Floor, St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Swedzinski, Ranking Member Acomb, and Members of the Energy Finance and Policy Committee,

Thank you for this opportunity to provide our initial thoughts on HF 2002. Center for Energy and Environment (CEE) supports lifting Minnesota's nuclear moratorium, provided that critical safeguards are established to protect host communities.

Minnesota's commitment to a 100% carbon-free energy future, coupled with the anticipated growth in electricity demand, underscores the need for a diversified carbon free energy portfolio. Achieving this goal requires aggressive investments in energy efficiency and consideration of all viable clean, reliable, and dispatchable energy sources. To make informed decisions, we must thoroughly evaluate the costs, benefits, and risks associated with each option—including nuclear power.

While nuclear energy may play a role in Minnesota's clean energy transition, it must come with appropriate community protections. The Prairie Island Nuclear Generating Plant, for example, began operations in 1973 without the input or consent of the Prairie Island Indian Community (PIIC), whose reservation is located adjacent to the plant. Over the decades, the Tribe has endured the risks associated with nuclear safety concerns and on-site waste storage, without receiving the corresponding benefits such as tax revenues, jobs, or direct access to the plant's generated power.

More recently, Xcel Energy has made strides to strengthen its relationship with PIIC and ensure that some benefits now flow to the Tribe. And, based on decades of their direct experience, PIIC's key concerns and needs should be addressed before lifting Minnesota's nuclear moratorium. We strongly believe Xcel and the Minnesota Legislature have a responsibility to resolve their issues before any policy changes take effect.

Additionally, any legislation to lift the moratorium must proactively address the needs of future host communities. No community—especially Tribal Nations and other historically marginalized groups—should be forced to host a nuclear facility against their will. A comprehensive policy must include clear commitments to long-term waste disposal, community safety, and prevention of displacement. PIIC's unique experience and perspective should inform these safeguards, ensuring that Minnesota does not repeat past mistakes.

CEE looks forward to engaging in this important discussion and working collaboratively to advance Minnesota's clean energy future, while upholding principles of fairness and protection for host communities. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris Duffrin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Chris Duffrin, President
Center for Energy and Environment

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