



February 28, 2022

Senator Nick Frentz
95 University Avenue W.
Minnesota Senate Bldg., Room 2415
St. Paul, MN 55155

Representative Zack Stephenson
509 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

RE: Support for HF 3151 / SF 2947

Dear Senator Frentz and Representative Stephenson:

I write to express the Citizens Utility Board's support for HF 3151/SF 2947, which provide a right of appeal to consumers with legal disputes regarding their utilities. Thank you for carrying this bill.

As an advocate for utility consumers, the Citizens Utility Board of Minnesota (CUB) fairly frequently refers individuals to the Consumer Affairs Office (CAO) of the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission. CAO staff accept consumer complaints and help to mediate solutions – for example, finding agreeable terms for bill repayment arrangements, resolving disputes about electricity or natural gas service, or many other topics. As far as we are aware, the CAO staff are generally able to find a resolution that satisfies the complaining consumer.

However, in the cases when the CAO staff does not resolve an issue to a consumer's satisfaction, we understand that the consumer has no legal avenue to pursue their complaint further. Your bill remedies that procedural dead end by providing a right of appeal to the Commission itself – and further through the courts, if warranted.

While we do not expect that such appeals will be necessary very often, it is critical that Minnesotans have a right to appeal decisions regarding critical and legally protected utility services.

Thank you for carrying this legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Annie Levenson-Falk'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Annie Levenson-Falk
Executive Director