



**CONSERVATION
MINNESOTA**

January 26, 2021

To Chair Long and the House Climate and Energy Finance and Policy Committee:

We are grateful to have the opportunity to write in support of HF164, the Energy Conservation and Optimization Act of 2021 (ECO). In our communications with Conservation Minnesota members across the state, we find that citizens strongly support policies that help solve the challenges of climate change without turning their daily lives upside down. ECO hits this mark.

ECO was built with a remarkable coalition of utilities both large and small, organized labor, energy businesses, and clean energy advocates. We know that to truly prevent the worst-case climate crisis we need all sectors that contribute carbon to decrease their emissions. The successful implementation of the Conservation Improvement Program has demonstrated that improved energy efficiency and adoption of smarter technologies can be a significant force to reduce carbon pollution. Some of the cleanest energy “available” is the energy that we do not use.

ECO will allow efficient fuel switching that will help capture the benefits of new technology that shows significant promise at reducing Minnesotans’ overall carbon footprints. As technology improves, the effectiveness of ECO will continue to ratchet up and allow Minnesotans to continue reducing their individual carbon emissions.

ECO also will allow utilities to help more low-income Minnesotans who can benefit from increased weatherization assistance and other programs that ease the burdensome costs of turning the lights on or staying warm in the winter.

At Conservation Minnesota we support policies across broad sectors that will result in decreased carbon emissions while being sensitive to the daily routines of Minnesotans. ECO is one important piece in this broader goal, and we are grateful for the opportunity to express our support of HF164.

Thank you,

Nels Paulsen
Policy Director