



**CITIZENS UTILITY BOARD**  
Empowering Minnesota Consumers

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info@cubminnesota.org, 651-300-4701

February 24, 2024

Senator Scott Dibble  
Minnesota Senate Bldg., Room 3107  
95 University Avenue W.  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Representative Andy Smith  
411 State Office Building  
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
St. Paul, MN 55155

RE: Support for SF 1783/HF 2032, appropriation for the Clean Energy Resource Teams (CERTs)

Dear Senator Dibble and Representative Smith:

I write to express the support of the Citizens Utility Board of Minnesota for SF 1783/HF 2032, an appropriation for the Clean Energy Resource Teams (CERTs). Our organization advocates on behalf of Minnesota consumers for affordable, reliable, and clean energy. We work closely with partners across the state to do our work.

CUB has collaborated with CERTs for years to connect with communities across the state. We routinely rely on resources produced by CERTs about energy efficiency, renewable energy, and mostly recently, the Inflation Reduction Act. In 2022, we partnered with recipients of CERTs Seed Grants and to help community members understand and lower their energy bills, including partnerships with Project FINE in Winona County; Unidos in Mankato, St. Cloud, Worthington, and the Twin Cities; the City of Bloomington; and the City of Maplewood. CUB's Outreach Director, Carmen Carruthers, serves on the Metro CERT Steering Committee, which has helped CUB to create deeper organizational relationships within the Metro and throughout the state. CERTs works hard to connect people, organizations, and resources to one another in a productive and thoughtful way.

Ever more people and communities are excited about advancing clean energy. CERTs has a proven track record of working with communities to advance their own energy goals. This funding will allow CERTs to staff up capacity around the state and ensure that the team is fully equipped to help communities advance their clean energy goals.

Thank you for carrying this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Annie Levenson-Falk". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Annie Levenson-Falk

cc: Chair Patty Acomb, House Climate and Energy Finance and Policy Committee  
Chair Nick Frentz, Senate Energy, Utilities, Environment and Climate Committee  
Joe Birkholz, Office of Governor Tim Walz



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Maple Grove, Minnesota 55369-4718  
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greatriverenergy.com

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February 24, 2023

RE: Support for HF2032 (Smith, DFL-Rochester)

Honorable members of the Minnesota House Climate and Energy Finance and Policy Committee,

Great River Energy is a not-for-profit wholesale electric power cooperative which provides electricity to approximately 1.7 million people through its 27 member-owner cooperatives and customers. Through its member-owners and customers, Great River Energy serves two-thirds of Minnesota geographically and parts of Wisconsin. Great River Energy and our member-owners work together to provide reliable, affordable, and sustainable energy, and we are guided by the seven cooperative principles.

The Clean Energy Resource Teams (CERTs), an organization housed within University of Minnesota Extension, offer broad programs across Minnesota, helping Minnesotans understand and implement energy solutions. Great River Energy and our member-owners partner with CERTs in trainings, facilitation, technical assistance, and collaboration and partnership development. Looking ahead, Great River Energy will partner with CERTs in opportunities including the forthcoming opportunities in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the Inflation Reduction Act, and Minnesota's Energy Conservation and Optimization Act. This request for increased funding from the general fund will bolster CERTs proven approach and will in turn benefit our membership and thus nearly 1.5 million Minnesotans.

We support their request for funding and look forward to working with this team to bring benefits, training, and opportunities to Minnesotans.

Sincerely,

/s/ Jeffrey Haase

Director, Member Services, DER and End Use Strategy



Subject: Letter of Support for HF 2032

Dear Chair Acomb and members of the House Climate and Energy Finance and Policy Committee,

My name is Jason Ludwigson and on behalf of the City of La Crescent I write today in support of HF 2032, an appropriation for the Clean Energy Resource Teams (CERTs).

La Crescent has been a leader in the Minnesota GreenSteps cities program. We have been recognized for achievements in the SolSmart program from the US Department of Energy, advanced to a Level 4 GreenStep city, and have been recognized as a Tree City and Bird City USA city.

We find the CERTs resources and people invaluable to our sustainability work. CERTs works statewide to equip people with resources to move energy efficiency and renewable energy projects forward. We have worked with CERTs in for public education and outreach efforts and local energy projects. CERTs helped support the installation of the first public Level 2 EV charger in Southeastern Minnesota.

The passing of the Inflation Reduction Act in 2022 has expanded opportunities for communities like La Crescent to advance clean energy goals. CERTs staff have presented invaluable information to the city and the GreenSteps committee about the IRA. CERTs, with its proven track record of working in and with communities to advance their own clean energy goals, is a great resource for advancing community clean energy goals across the state. This additional funding will allow CERTs to staff up regional capacity around the State and ensure that the team is fully equipped to provide the necessary resources and programming to help communities advance their clean energy goals.

We encourage you to support this bill.

Sincerely,

*Jason Ludwigson*

March 1, 2023

**RE: Local Government Support for House File 2032: Appropriation for Clean Energy Resource Teams**

Honorable Members of the Climate and Energy Finance and Policy Committee:

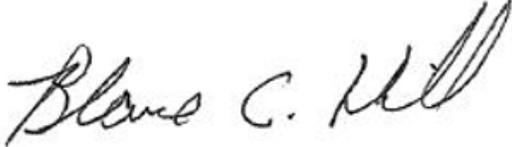
The undersigned local elected officials support the appropriation for the Clean Energy Resource Teams (CERTs) partnership.

Many Minnesota local governments have energy goals and/or have adopted energy action plans. Most energy is used in homes, businesses, and industrial operations located within cities, counties, and tribal communities. CERTs has a strong history of helping communities across the state advance energy efficiency and renewable energy projects with valuable educational resources, programs, and other assistance.

With a multitude of new federal clean energy funding opportunities on the horizon, CERTs support and guidance is more important than ever for Minnesota communities. This bill will increase CERTs capacity to help local jurisdictions implement clean energy projects and achieve their clean energy goals.

To date, the following local elected officials have signed on to support this bill:

Name & Title	Signature
<b>Bill Blonigan</b> Mayor of Robbinsdale	<i>William A. Blonigan</i>
<b>Amáda Márquez Simula</b> Mayor of Columbia Heights	<i>Amáda Márquez Simula</i>
<b>Lona Dallessandro</b> Council Member, City of Bloomington	<i>Lona Dallessandro</i>
<b>Rachel James</b> Council Member, City of Columbia Heights	<i>Rachel James</i>
<b>Steve Lindaas</b> Council Member, City of Moorhead	<i>Steve Lindaas</i>
<b>Dr. Kimberly Wilburn</b> Council Member, City of Minnetonka	<i>Kimberly Wilburn</i>

<b>Blaine Hill</b> City Manager, Morris	
<b>Justice Spriggs</b> Council Member, City of Columbia Heights	<i>Justice Spriggs</i>
<b>Sue Budd</b> Council Member, City of St. Louis Park	<i>Sue Budd</i>



305 Roselawn Ave E | Suite 200 | St. Paul, MN 55117  
Phone: (651) 639-1223 | [www.mfu.org](http://www.mfu.org)

February 26, 2023

Chair Patty Acomb  
House Climate and Energy Finance and Policy  
593 State Office Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Acomb and members of the committee:

On behalf of Minnesota Farmers Union (MFU), I write to share our strong support for Representative Smith's HF2032 and providing additional funding to the Clean Energy Resource Teams (CERTs). In partnering with their staff across the state, we have found CERTs to be a reliable and responsive source of nonbiased information that helps our members make smart investments in efficiency, solar, and clean energy projects.

MFU is a grassroots membership organization that has represented Minnesota's family farmers, ranchers, and rural communities since 1918. Our members care about clean energy not only because they are among those on the front lines of climate change, but also because they see opportunities to lower energy costs, diversify income, and make their farm businesses resilient.

Over the past 7 years, MFU has been proud to partner with CERTs to host Clean Energy Working Sessions across the state. Most recently, we hosted a meeting in Stearns County attended by 60 farmers who were curious to learn more about solar. At these events, some farmers come eager to find ways to incorporate solar onto their farm and others are more skeptical, looking for nonbiased information about changes they're seeing in their community. Regardless, CERTs is responsive, accountable, and resourceful, helping our members and others feel confident in decisions they're making related to clean energy.

Based on this experience and others we are glad to place our support behind CERTs and Representative Smith's bill. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact our Government Relations Director, Stu Lourey, at [stu@mfu.org](mailto:stu@mfu.org) or (320) 232-3047. Thank you for considering the needs and perspectives of Minnesota's farm families.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gary Wertish". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped "G" and "W".

Gary Wertish  
President, Minnesota Farmers Union

Dear Mike and Robin:

The Region Five Development Commission (R5DC) strongly supports HF 2032 which provides additional funding to the Clean Energy Resource Teams (CERTs) partnership.

I have personally worked with CERTs since their very early days, 20 years ago, and R5DC also has many years of experience directly collaborating with CERTs on energy efficiency and renewable energy projects. CERTs has proven incredibly effective at providing technical assistance and successfully helped deliver innumerable clean energy projects statewide. Further, staff is accessible and available regionally, and CERTs consistently, continuously and intentionally incorporates community feedback and needs into their efforts. CERTs has done an excellent job of being inclusive and respectful of the wide variety of motivations Minnesotans may have for deploying clean energy.

Interest in advancing clean energy projects has never been higher, and thus the moment is ripe for approving additional funding for CERTs to continue providing the reliable information required for successful clean energy project implementation. The appropriations identified in HF 2032 would support full-time staff regionally, and help advance the many local energy projects in which R5DC is directly engaged. Our partnership with CERTs has truly been invaluable over the years. CERTs has provided a wide variety of assistance, from seed grants for growing ideas to offering critical technical assistance to local governments, schools and small businesses. Staff frequently engages directly with constituents on the ground. For specific examples, R5DC has directly been supported by CERTs in just the last few months in energy efficiency and renewable energy outreach efforts to three small cities, and technical assistance with a local school which subsequently applied for the Solar for Schools grant.

We love CERTs!!! Without this critical funding to allow staff to transition to full-time, and in this very tight labor market, CERTs will be faced with losing incredibly knowledgeable employees and subsequently be unable to provide the high quality support the public has come to expect after so many years. We don't want that to happen to this critical, wonderful Minnesota-grown partnership.

Please feel free to reach out with any additional questions.

Many thanks for your consideration,  
**BJ Allen** | R5DC & NCEDA Deputy Director  
[bjallen@regionfive.org](mailto:bjallen@regionfive.org)  
Direct: 218.894.3233x9 | Mobile: 218.209.5584  
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**Bridging Relationships & Resources**

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February 24, 2023

Subject: Support for HF 2032

Dear Chair Acomb and members of the House Climate and Energy Finance and Policy Committee,

My name is Melissa Feine on behalf of Semcac, a non-profit, Community Action Agency located in southeast Minnesota. I write today in support of HF 2032, an appropriation for the Clean Energy Resource Teams (CERTs).

My organization empowers people and advocates for people to enhance their self-sufficiency by maximizing community resources. Semcac provides services in Head Start, Transportation, Weatherization, Energy Assistance, Senior Services, Housing and a Clinic. I have been in the Weatherization program for 16 ½ years and just recently became the Director of the Energy Assistance, Weatherization & Housing programs.

I find the CERTs resources and people valuable to our work. CERTs works statewide to equip people with resources to move energy efficiency and renewable energy projects forward. We have received support from CERTs to provide interpretation and translation services for households applying for the Energy Assistance and Weatherization Programs. We had informational posters, program forms used to determine program eligibility and a notice on our website translated into 5 different languages to assist us in outreach efforts to underserved households.

There are ever more people and communities excited about and interested in advancing clean energy. CERTs has a proven track record of working in and with communities to advance their own clean energy goals. This additional funding will allow CERTs to staff up regional capacity around the State and ensure that the team is fully equipped to provide the necessary resources and programming to help communities advance their clean energy goals.

We encourage you to support this bill.

Sincerely,

*Melissa Feine*

Melissa Feine  
Energy & Housing Services Director

CC: Robin Schmidt

Dodge	Fillmore	Freeborn	Houston	Mower	Steele	Winona
634-4350	765-2761	373-1329	725-3677	433-5889	451-7134	452-8396

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