

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

*Department of Bioproducts and Biosystems Engineering
College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences
College of Science and Engineering*

*BBE North
Kaufert Lab
2004 Folwell Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55108-6130
612-624-1293
Fax: 612-625-6286*

*BBE South
BioAgEng Building
1390 Eckles Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55108-6005
612-625-7733
Fax: 612-624-3005*

*E-mail: bbe@umn.edu
Web: www.bbe.umn.edu*

March 11, 2021

Chair Representative Jamie Long
Members of the Committee
House Energy and Climate Finance and Policy
State Capitol Building
St. Paul Minnesota

I am writing in support of the Natural Gas Innovation Act, H.F. 239. The Natural Gas Innovation Act would allow the state's gas utilities to begin to decarbonize the natural gas distribution system by incorporating low and no carbon fuels into their supply mix. One fuel included in the Act that has immediate promise to displace the use of fossil natural gas is renewable natural gas or biogas produced via the anaerobic digestion of organic wastes.

I am enthusiastic about the possibilities to use energy derived from organic waste in place of fossil fuels. Technology to use organic wastes, such as food waste, agricultural waste, and wastewater, exists and is in use now at hundreds of sites across the country. Using organic wastes as a substitute for fossil natural gas reduces lifecycle carbon emissions and incents waste management practices that are beneficial for local water quality. However, despite significant potential, Minnesota is lagging behind other states in using its organic waste resources to generate low-carbon energy. The Natural Gas Innovation Act would allow Minnesota natural gas utilities to begin buying renewable natural gas for their customers. This will spur development of renewable natural gas facilities in the state and displace fossil gas use with clean energy. I urge you to pass the Natural Gas Innovation Act and turn Minnesota's organic wastes from a problem into a solution.

Best



Dr. Bo Hu
Professor,
Department of Bioproducts and Biosystems Engineering
University of Minnesota