



March 23, 2026

Minnesota House of Representatives
Housing Finance Committee
Centennial Office Building
658 Cedar Street
St. Paul, MN 55155

Members of the Minnesota House of Representatives Housing Finance Committee:

My name is Karen Arpino, and I am the Executive Director of the North Central Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Association (NCHPBA), a regional trade association representing manufacturers, distributors, and retailers of hearth, heating, and outdoor cooking appliances across seven Midwestern states, including Minnesota. On behalf of our members, most of whom are locally owned retailers serving communities across the state – I write in support of House Files 483 and 484.

NCHPBA members are deeply rooted in Minnesota’s local economies. Our retailers employ skilled sales, installation and service professionals who help homeowners select and maintain safe, reliable heating appliances that meet their needs and budgets. In addition, a small number of manufacturers operate in Minnesota, producing appliances that are sold through local dealers and supported by distribution and service networks.

HF 483 and HF 484 help protect consumer access to affordable and dependable heating options at a time when housing costs and utility bills remain a significant concern for Minnesota families. Supplemental heating appliances such as fireplaces and inserts provide practical, reliable solutions that help homeowners manage heating costs, maintain comfort during extreme cold, and ensure resiliency during power outages – an especially important consideration given Minnesota’s climate.

These bills also provide important regulatory clarity and help avoid policies that restrict lawful consumer choice. In other states and municipalities, efforts to limit or ban certain energy sources for home appliances have faced legal challenges under the federal Energy Policy and Conservation Act (EPCA), which restricts state and local authority over the energy use of covered consumer products. Advancing HF 483 and HF 484 helps Minnesota avoid legal uncertainty while offering consistency for homeowners, builders, and retailers.

By moving these bills forward, the Legislature can support housing affordability, preserve access to reliable heating technologies, and protect local retail jobs, while ensuring energy decisions remain in the hands of Minnesota consumers rather than mandates.

We respectfully urge the committee to advance HF 483 and HF 484. Thank you for your leadership and continued focus on strengthening Minnesota’s housing market and local



economies. Please do not hesitate to contact me if the NCHPBA or our members can provide additional information or support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Karen Arpino', is written in a cursive style.

Karen Arpino
Executive Director
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