



January 20, 2023

House Climate and Energy Committee

Re: HF 393 (Stephenson)

Committee members,

I write in support of HF393, a bill to provide additional protections to utility customers facing disconnection of their utility service. Unlike utility customers in every other state, Minnesotans have no ability under current law to appeal to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission alleging a violation of law, rule or tariff.

Community Action Agencies in Minnesota administer the federally-funded Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program. We are in daily contact with consumers that have or will be threatened with termination of their heating or electricity service. In addition to the stress and anxiety that accompany such actions, many customers depend on utility services to operate essential home medical equipment. Lacking any means to redress an incorrect or unlawful decision to disconnect service by their utility company leaves such customers with few options.

HF393 makes appeals a last resort, but gives customers the opportunity for due process before they lose or are refused service. In our view, this strikes the appropriate balance between consumer and utility interests. We urge early adoption of this vital consumer protection.

Sincerely,

William Grant, Executive Director