

Chairman Beltz, members of the committee, on behalf of the Energy & Environmental Research Center (EERC) we appreciate this opportunity to offer comments on Senate Bill 2360. As a leading developer of cleaner, more efficient energy and environmental technologies, the EERC supports an all-of-the-above approach to developing energy resources. Over the past several years the EERC has been involved with numerous projects to reduce carbon emissions while ensuring reliability, such as carbon capture technology for fossil-fuel electric generation as well as new and emerging fuels such as hydrogen, and options for energy storage.

At the direction of the legislature, and in conjunction with the Lignite Energy Council, the EERC just completed a study on a lignite plant of the future. That study explored regulatory, financial, technological, and other issues related to construction of a new, lignite-fired power facility in North Dakota. This legislation being heard today would implement a similar review for geothermal energy. As the state of North Dakota explores options for increased energy production, it is important to fully understand the feasibility, costs, impacts, and the role that geothermal might play in North Dakota's energy industry.

The EERC has looked at geothermal opportunities in the state in the past, and we believe that this technology would benefit from the topic areas identified by SB 2360, particularly the application to nonproductive oil and gas wells. While our research to-date has indicated potential, more work remains to demonstrate feasibility and warrant additional exploration.

We appreciate the legislature's ongoing support of energy innovation and pursuing solutions to environmental challenges while growing our energy sector and its contributions to the state. Thank you again for this opportunity to provide comment.