

March 20, 2025

Chair Todd Porter and members of the House Energy and Natural Resources Committee,

On behalf of ALLETE / MN Power, we write in strong support for Senate Bill 2339 which provides the option for qualified utilities to submit wildfire mitigation plans to the Public Service Commission and improve the financial certainty of these critical electric services. We thank Senator Kessel and all other sponsors for their leadership on this issue and encourage the committee to approve today's bill.

MN Power owns and operates transmission lines throughout the state, including a high-voltage direct current transmission line which connects energy generation near Center, ND with Duluth, MN. These lines improve grid resilience and provide essential gateways for North Dakota energy production to access valuable markets.

Public safety is a paramount priority for our company and submitting wildfire mitigation plans is an important tool in planning ahead. The bill outlines several aspects that must be included in these plans, including procedures for vegetation management, preventative programs to reduce the risk of electric facilities, procedures for restoring an electrical system in the event of a wildfire, and more.

In exchange, qualified utilities which provide electric or transmission services will avoid facing insolvency in the case of a wildfire, ultimately benefiting energy customers like businesses and families. Our focus on prevention, protection, and recovery from potential wildfires is enhanced through this bill, a benefit to all North Dakotans.

Lastly, we oppose amendments which seek to make changes at this time to an underlying bill which has already been drafted and worked through by a robust coalition of interested stakeholders. The underlying bill received a strong 45-1-1 Senate floor vote in February and look forward to the bill advancing to the House floor.

Wildfires present a national risk, so North Dakota's forward-looking approach through this legislation is appreciated. Again, we thank the sponsors of SB 2339 and urge the committee to approve the bill for possible floor consideration.

Sincerely,

/s/

Zach Martin
Government Affairs Manager
ALLETE / MN Power