

Chairman Porter, members of the committee, on behalf of the Energy and Environmental Research Center I appreciate this opportunity to offer comments on House Bill 1025. 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 advanced nuclear. As the state of North Dakota explores options for future electric generation - particularly as we look at forecasts for increasing electric load - it is important to fully understand the feasibility, costs, impacts, and the role that nuclear might play in the regional electric grid and overall North Dakota energy industry.

I would note that while the EERC stands ready to lend its expertise to this study, there is language currently within the century code that limits the ability of the State Energy Research Center, and by association the EERC, to conduct research on nuclear energy. However, Sen. Hogue has also introduced Senate Bill 2159 to lift this language, which would allow for our participation should the legislature support that effort.

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 and I would be happy to answer any questions.