

January 31, 2025

Chair Patten and members of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee,

On behalf of ALLETE / MN Power, we write in strong support of Senate Bill 2339 which provides an option for qualified utilities to submit wildfire mitigation plans to the Public Service Commission and improve the financial certainty for 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 reach valuable markets.

Public safety is a paramount priority for our company. Submitting a wildfire mitigation plan in accordance with this bill's provisions is an important tool for planning for the future and creating opportunities for further collaboration. 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.

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