



Contact: Zach Martin
Manager – Government Affairs
ALLETE / MN Power
262.719.9678
zmartin@mnpower.com

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

On behalf of ALLETE / MN Power, we write in support of House Bill 1258, an important energy infrastructure bill which will improve the permitting process for transmission lines across the state. We thank Rep. Brandenburg and all other sponsors for their leadership on this issue and encourage the committee to approve today's bill.

Our company has a proud history of investing in the state of North Dakota with a strong presence in the energy sector. North Dakota is a leader in energy generation and transmission plays an important role in transporting electrons to market.

However, we are witnessing unworkable county ordinances that could hamstring the energy sector's ability to make further investments into North Dakota's electric grid and add unnecessary cost in construction. These would negatively impact energy generators and therefore residents, businesses, and industries that depend on reliable energy on a daily basis.

House Bill 1258 recognizes the importance of transmission by designating the Public Service Commission (PSC) with the sole authority of siting transmission lines. The PSC interacts closely with the Midcontinent Independent System Operator, Southwest Power Pool, and other transmission planners to design and support an electric grid to the benefit of North Dakota. The PSC also employs the staff needed to analyze the cost and benefits of a transmission project and its statewide impacts.

Lastly, transmission boosts sales and property tax revenues to state and local county units, an important source of funding for critical services. The bill's merits are further indicated by strong support and passage on the House floor in January, 86-7-1.

Thank you for incorporating our comments into the committee's decision process and we encourage passage of House Bill 1258.

Sincerely,

Zach Martin
Government Affairs Manager
ALLETE / MN Power