

May 14, 2021

Minnesota Public Utilities Commission  
121 7th Place East, Suite 350  
St. Paul, MN 55101

**Re: Letter of Support – Minnesota Power Integrated Resource Plan (Docket 21-33)**

The Duluth Area Chamber of Commerce submits this letter of support for the Minnesota Power Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) as submitted to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission, Docket #21-33. We strongly believe the steps detailed in the IRP will enhance the economy of Duluth and the state of Minnesota by leading the way towards a sustainable future for residents and businesses.


Northern Minnesota serves a variety of price-sensitive and globally-competitive industries. Minnesota Power's 2021 Plan outlines detailed steps to delivering safe, reliable, and affordable energy while ensuring a sustainable future for the environment, consumers, and Minnesota's economy.

Supporting this plan aligns directly with several of the Duluth Chamber's 2021 Key Initiatives:

- **Competitive Advantage:** The competitiveness of a company is closely tied to the health of its community. Minnesota Power's IRP will produce a power supply that is 70 percent renewable in 2030, reduce carbon emissions by 80 percent by 2035, and achieve coal-free energy by 2035, while helping to ensure reliable and affordable power for Minnesota Power customers.
- **Industry:** Approximately 61 percent of the Minnesota Power's retail and required resale energy sales serve industrial customers. Stakeholders communicated to Minnesota Power that having competitive and affordable electric rates was an important issue, and a key aspect of affordability is avoiding large increases in power supply costs. Making prudent and reasonable power supply plans for meeting future electric needs of industry, and all other customers, is critical in helping to keep economic balance in place to best serve all customers.
- **Community Growth:** In 2019 the *New York Times* reported Duluth as a climate-change refuge following Harvard University Graduate School of Design lecturer Jesse Keenan's research. In early 2021, *CNN* continued the story as it researched **Duluth's investments** in a clean-energy future in ways that not all industrial towns have. This IRP proposes an addition of 200 MW of wind by 2025, 200 MW of solar by 2030, and the removal of the Boswell Energy Center to cease coal operations by 2035. Achieving these sustainable efforts will continue Duluth and Northern Minnesota communities as leaders in global sustainability efforts, attracting more community growth.

In summary, the Chamber stands in solidarity to support the Minnesota Power Integrated Resource Plan. Minnesota Power has utilized ample research, impact studies, and community outreach, to generate a comprehensive plan for this environmental investment. Our Minnesota communities, businesses, and residents are seeking efforts in sustainability; this plan accomplishes just that.

Respectfully submitted,



David Ross  
President & CEO