March 23, 2020

Governor Tim Walz and Lt. Governor Peggy Flanagan
130 State Capitol
75 Rev Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155

Subject: Clean Energy Industry Seeks COVID-19 Guidance

Dear Governor Walz and Lt. Governor Flanagan,

On behalf of Minnesota’s clean energy business community, we write to you to encourage support and request clear guidance regarding essential businesses as you make decisions that significantly impact private sector operations in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Minnesota’s clean energy industry comprises over 61,000 workers in critical sectors, such as electrical power. Already, our industry is utilizing social distancing and remote-work options as it manufactures, installs, maintains, and repairs products and services that are critical to supplying and optimizing power while providing for the effective and safe operations of homes and buildings across our state. This work of installing and operating equipment is essential to the health, safety, and well-being of our state’s infrastructure as well as our neighbors and communities, including hospitals, homes, and businesses. We believe that our industry must continue to operate to install and support equipment where appropriate public health measures are in place.

On March 19, 2020, The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) provided guidance on essential workers related to critical infrastructure. That guidance highlighted work necessary for the manufacturing of materials and products needed for energy, including maintenance of our electric grid1. Further, many states currently functioning under “shelter in place” orders have also identified electrical workers as part of essential workforces. We respectfully ask that Minnesota follows DHS guidance for critical industrial sectors and a critical infrastructure workforce, allowing our industry to continue to provide secure, clean, and affordable energy in our communities.

Workers in Minnesota’s clean energy industry, including wind, solar, energy storage, building energy efficiency, advanced grid technologies, and similar sectors understand how vital their role is in response to this global crisis. We stand ready and prepared to continue this crucial work of providing essential services as we face the unprecedented challenges related to COVID-19.

Thank you for your bold and steady leadership during this critical time as we address the public health and economic challenges ahead as One Minnesota.

Sincerely,

Gregg Mast    Beth Soholt
Executive Director   Executive Director
Clean Energy Economy Minnesota    Clean Grid Alliance