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State of Minnesota

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NINETY-THIRD SESSION

H. F. No. 4688

03/07/2024 Authored by Hemmingsen-Jaeger, Carroll, Kraft and Stephenson The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Climate and Energy Finance and Policy

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to energy; establishing a utility thermal energy network deployment work
1.3 group; requiring a report.

1.4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.5 Section 1. THERMAL ENERGY NETWORK DEPLOYMENT WORK GROUP.

1.6 Subdivision 1. Direction. The Public Utilities Commission must establish a thermal
1.7 energy network deployment work group to examine the potential regulatory opportunities
1.8 for regulated natural gas utilities to deploy thermal energy networks and potential barriers
1.9 to development. The work group must examine the public benefits, costs, and impacts of
1.10 deployment of thermal energy networks, as well as examine rate design options.

1.11 Subd. 2. Membership. (a) The work group consists of at least the following:

- 1.12 (1) representatives of the Department of Commerce;
1.13 (2) representatives of the Office of the Attorney General;
1.14 (3) representatives from utilities;
1.15 (4) representatives from clean energy;
1.16 (5) representatives from labor organizations;
1.17 (6) geothermal technology providers;
1.18 (7) representatives from consumer protection organizations;
1.19 (8) representatives from cities; and
1.20 (9) representatives from low-income communities.

2.1 (b) The executive director may invite others to participate in one or more meetings of  
2.2 the work group.

2.3 Subd. 3. **Duties.** The work group must produce a series of recommendations regarding  
2.4 how to deploy thermal energy networks within a regulated context in a manner that protects  
2.5 the public interest and considers reliability, affordability, environmental impacts, and  
2.6 socioeconomic impacts. The recommendations must be submitted into Public Utilities  
2.7 Commission docket number 21-565.

2.8 Subd. 4. **Report to legislature.** The work group must submit a report detailing the work  
2.9 group's findings and recommendations to the chairs and ranking minority members of the  
2.10 legislative committees and divisions with jurisdiction over energy policy and finance by  
2.11 December 31, 2025. The Public Utilities Commission may hire a consultant to facilitate  
2.12 and write the report. The work group terminates the day after the report under this subdivision  
2.13 is submitted.