

May 2, 2007

Chief Miswagon,

The Minnesota Legislature Conference Committee passed the following amendment on to the final version of the Environment & Energy Omnibus Finance Bill (S.F. 2096) at approximately 11:30 a.m. today. The final bill should be passed off the Senate and House Floor by the end of this week or early next. The Governor has not yet agreed to support the bill but it is likely he will. The amendment below had previously been a contentious issue with the Governor Pawlenty writing a letter to committee members threatening to VETO the entire bill based on the NFA monitoring and reporting. His staff told me that "he had promised the Premier Doer to veto the entire bill" if the NFA monitoring and reporting language was kept in."

Manitoba Hydro lobbyist fought very hard to kill the amendment but many Minnesotan electricity consumers' contacted legislators urging them to support the NFA monitoring and reporting language. Proponent and opponents' were given five minutes on Monday April 30, 2007 to argue their reasons for support or opposition. Xcel Energy and Manitoba Hydro testified against the amendment and I testified on behalf of the amendment. We clearly won the debate that evening and Manitoba Hydro and Xcel Energy did not do well. Senator Chaudhary asked many difficult questions of Manitoba Hydro and Xcel Energy and it became increasing clear to the other conference committee members that Manitoba Hydro and Xcel Energy's opposition to this amendment was weak and made them look like they were trying to hide something. They were unable to answer very basic questions about shorelines impacted, unemployment, and other issues.

Manitoba Hydro and Xcel Energy lobbied us very hard for a compromise over the past few days. Xcel Energy wanted to not responsible for reporting and Manitoba Hydro was worried that if this amendment was killed it might political implications back in Manitoba. Thus the following language was agreed to and all parties including the Governor of Minnesota agreed to support this language. (Please view pdf attachment.)

The final amendment was offered by Representative Bill Hity and passed unanimously. Madam Chair Ellen Anderson was heroic in helping to pass this language as well. After the meeting she said, "This is significant, and should have a huge impact." She told me that if they did not comply with the request she was willing to consider more punitive language in the future.

The bill should pass in the near future branches of the legislature and should be to the Governors' desk by next week. I encourage you and other members of your community to send e-mails to the committee members thanking them for their support. I am attaching a copy of all their contact information. If you have any questions please call me at 651-238-5376.

I look forward to seeing you again.

Respectfully,

Ken Bradley

Senior Policy Associate
408 Saint Peter Street, Suite 220
St. Paul, MN 55102
651-726-7568

www.fresh-energy.org

Fresh Energy: working to enhance our economies, protect human health and communities, restore our environment, and establish energy independence.