

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Modern economies are built upon a foundation of abundant, affordable, and reliable access to energy. Our quality of life and even our lifespans are influenced or determined by that access.

It is also true that as we have become wealthier, we have come to demand that energy meet a fourth criterion: that it be cleaner. Even in the rapidly modernizing parts of the world, such as China, initial indifference to the environmental costs of expanding access to energy has been replaced by an awareness that pollution can reduce human wellbeing, just as access to energy can increase it.

A new generation of technology is emerging that can meet all four of those criteria; energy can be affordable, abundant, reliable, and clean. Not only are these criteria in conflict, but meeting all of them is necessary to continue expanding our economy and our wellbeing.

Minnesota has been at the forefront of imposing top-down government solutions to speed the transition to these newer sources of energy. However, the focus on top-down solutions hides the fact that many state policies actually inhibit the rapid growth of an emerging market for renewable technologies at the consumer and industry levels.

In order to increase the rapid spread of innovative technologies, Minnesota needs to reform its legal and regulatory environment to allow the development of a dynamic market. Despite the fact that in many ways the state is well positioned to take advantage and lead in the development of innovative power generation and distribution, our current regulations are slowing the growth in renewable technology.

In fact, states like Texas—a fossil fuel producing state—are moving ahead of Minnesota in the deployment of renewables, because market forces are working there in a way they cannot here.

Our state energy market is ripe for reform, and with that reform Minnesota can again lead the way to a future where energy is affordable, abundant, reliable, and clean. Which is exactly what our citizens and our policymakers have made clear that they demand.