



CONSERVATION
MINNESOTA

March 20, 2025

Co-Chair Swedzinski, Co-Chair Acomb, and Members of the House Energy Committee:

Conservation Minnesota urges your support for HF701 (Johnson) to provide funding through the Renewable Development Account for an anaerobic digester energy system in Scott County. This proposal represents an innovative collaboration to help solve Minnesota's growing solid waste problem.

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency estimates organic waste makes up about 1/3rd of the waste stream in Minnesota. Without organics diversion programs or food waste prevention, this waste is either buried in landfills or burned at incinerators like the Hennepin Energy Recovery Center (or HERC). Food waste in landfills breaks down and produces methane, a greenhouse gas with heat-trapping potential 25 times greater than carbon dioxide.

HF701 (Johnson) presents a significant opportunity to reduce landfilling and incineration of organic waste. A new anaerobic digester will provide a much-needed solution to our food waste issue and simultaneously turn that waste into a reliable energy resource. This facility will process an estimated 75,000 tons of residential food waste per year. The expected reduction in greenhouse gas emissions is equal to the impact of taking over 6,000 cars off the road. It will also generate 10,000 tons of biochar each year, which can be useful for sequestering carbon as a soil amendment.

The Renewable Development Account has a proven track record of funding innovative energy projects like this proposal. The repurposing of food waste and organic material could reduce demand on traditional energy sources and could lead to increased efficiencies in our statewide waste disposal system. Truly, the benefits of a project like this and many others funded by the RDA are widespread and plenty.

In summary, we ask for your support of HF701 (Johnson), which is a win-win for our solid waste system and our renewable energy goals. This innovative public-private partnership is exactly the type of creative solution that Minnesota needs as we move towards a cleaner future.

Sincerely,
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