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March 3, 2023

Nebraska Legislature- Appropriations Committee

RE: LB560, State intent to seek federal funds under the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022

Dear Chairperson Clements and Members of the Appropriations Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. The Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance (MEEA) is a nonpartisan, nonprofit, regional membership organization. MEEA serves as a collaborative network, promoting energy efficiency to optimize energy generation, reduce consumption, create jobs and decrease carbon emissions in all Midwest communities. Our members include energy efficiency-related businesses, governments, utilities, academic institutions, researchers and advocacy groups. MEEA engages on energy efficiency policy and programs in 13 Midwest states, including Nebraska, where 54 of our 160+ members are headquartered or operating. MEEA has been working in Nebraska since 2012 when we helped launch the Nebraska Energy Code Compliance Collaborative and have provided technical assistance on building science and energy code compliance since 2020.

We encourage Nebraska to seek all federal funding offered by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) to benefit your state. MEEA has worked with our region's state energy offices to educate on federal funding opportunities, share best practices and support collaboration between the states. We have routinely engaged with the National Association of State Energy Officials, the U.S. Department of Energy and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to ensure the views of Midwestern states are reflected in federal guidance and program implementation.

Much of the funding in the IRA is targeted toward energy efficiency, one of the easiest and most cost-effective ways to reduce energy costs for consumers, conserve energy, boost economic competition and uplift underserved communities – both urban and rural. Energy efficiency is also an especially valuable resource to reduce peak demand and grid load, thereby serving as a crucial component of better grid management and increased resiliency. These benefits are even more important in Nebraska, the only state in the nation served exclusively by public power.

We encourage the state to apply for and accept all available federal funds. By using these funds, Nebraska will help residents reduce their energy bills and pollution while strengthening the resiliency of the public power system. Administering these programs can be challenging, as many state energy offices are small and understaffed. Notably, however, IIJA dramatically increased Nebraska's state energy program funding, adding



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\$4,603,380 over five years to the FY2022 base SEP allocation of \$583,990. We encourage Nebraska to consider how SEP funds could bolster the capacity of the Nebraska energy office. IJJA funds, cross-state collaboration and creative program design offer policymakers an array of options for designing state-specific solutions. Finally, it is worth noting states which fail to use funds may lose them to other, more active states. We do not want to see Nebraska miss the opportunity to benefit.

We stand ready to assist you and the state energy office in any way we can. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Policy Manager Maddie Wazowicz at [mwazowicz@mwalliance.org](mailto:mwazowicz@mwalliance.org). Thank you.

Sincerely,

Stacey Paradis, Executive Director  
Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance

*These comments reflect the views of the Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance – a Regional Energy Efficiency Organization as designated by the U.S. Department of Energy – and not the organization's members or individual entities represented on our board of directors.*