

- 1. Minnesota's current net metering laws allow co-op members who install solar and small wind on their property to avoid paying their fair share for the infrastructure required to provide them with electricity when the sun isn't shining or the wind isn't blowing. Those costs are then shifted onto their neighbors. As more rural electric cooperative members add solar and small wind there is cost-shifting onto others. What do you think about Minnesota's current net metering laws? What role should the state play in deciding how electric co-ops address these members' desire to add renewable energy?**

I carried amendments to eliminate or repeal net metering laws at the legislature. I consider them a transfer of wealth to the haves from the have-nots. I don't believe the state should have a major role in deciding how electric co-ops address their member's desire to add renewable energy. Renewable energy should only be implemented when it reduces the cost of electricity. I do not believe the state should micro-manage electric co-ops. I support laws that create an equal playing field for the providers of electricity for our citizen farms and business' and I oppose the state picking winners and losers and discriminating against rural electric co-ops.

- 2. Co-ops exist because people in rural areas worked together to form non-profit organizations to serve rural Minnesotans. Now, third party companies have become more active in trying to operate within cooperative territories. These third party companies are looking to take the most profitable customers and leave the cost of maintaining the grid in the rural areas of Minnesota to fewer and fewer rural residents. How do you believe situations with third party companies should be handled?**

I would opposed third-party companies coming in to be profitable and leave the cost of maintaining the grid to the rural areas of Minnesota. Again, this is another transfer of wealth to the haves from the have-nots. I would ban third-party companies from competing unless they were required to pick up the cost of maintaining the grid in the rural areas of Minnesota.

- 3. The Minnesota Legislature has implemented or increased mandates of certain renewable generation sources while electric cooperatives have continued to integrate and increasing amount of renewable energy into our generation mix. We have also helped consumers save money by teaching them ways to lower their individual demand for electricity. Do you support state mandates on renewable energy and conservation? What role do you**

think the state should play in determining the mix of energy used by electric co-ops?

I do not support mandates on renewable energy. I, in fact, authored a bill to repeal the renewable energy mandate in the State of Minnesota during my first legislative session. I believe the market should be allowed to determine the mix of energy used by electric co-ops. Again, the only renewable energy that I support is renewable energy that is economically viable and would reduce the cost of electricity to all consumers (hydroelectricity).

- 4. Minnesota leads the country in the number of stray voltage cases landing in courts. Minnesota has seen an increasing number of questionable cases brought to court due to the increase in consultants looking to benefit financially from a lawsuit. How do you believe these issues should be addressed in Minnesota? What qualifications should people who testify on stray voltage cases have?**

I support tort reform, especially on frivolous lawsuits. I have also been a supporter of loser pay legislation. The state has caps on their liability in a number of areas. I believe the private sector should also have reasonable caps and not unlimited liability to allow trial lawyers to bring frivolous lawsuits with the potential of huge settlements and then extracting a settlement on a questionable case due to the threat of litigation. Minnesota need to have loser pay provisions for their lawsuits and also caps depending on the severity of the liability. Potential stray voltage should first have to go in front of a board of experts to determine the scientific and legal basis before allowing to go forward in the courts.

- 5. In the case of natural disasters, municipal utilities are entitled to a state match during FEMA-declared disaster to help repair damage to electric lines and infrastructure. Co-ops have access to state funds, but only through an application process with their county office that is not guaranteed. What role should the state play in helping rural electric co-ops turn the lights back on after natural disasters?**

On natural disasters, I would support co-ops going directly to a state match and not having to go through an application process at the county level. Co-ops should be treated equally with municipality utilities and not discriminated against when natural disasters happen in order to restore electricity to our rural farms and businesses as quickly as possible.

CLOSING COMMENTS:

I am a strong supporter of rural co-ops. I believe they do a great service for our families, farms, and businesses in the State of Minnesota and I will work to create an equal playing field for them if fortunate enough to be elected to the state legislature.

Sincerely,

State Rep. Glenn Gruenhagen

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