

## Governor Walz Celebrates Landmark ECO Act

The bipartisan legislation will strengthen Minnesota's energy conservation programs, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and create jobs

Today, Governor Tim Walz and Lieutenant Governor Peggy Flanagan held a ceremonial bill signing to celebrate the landmark Energy Conservation and Optimization Act of 2021 (ECO Act). The ECO Act will strengthen Minnesota's energy conservation programs, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and create local jobs across the state through electrical, heating and cooling, ventilation, and insulation installation projects in Minnesota homes and businesses.

**"The ECO Act will ensure that Minnesota continues to be leader in energy policy,"** said Governor Walz. **"This nation-leading energy conservation legislation will help Minnesota families and small businesses save money, create good-paying jobs, and, most importantly, protect Minnesota's environment for generations to come."**

**"Through the ECO Act, with investments in conservation, and through Minnesota's Energy and Weatherization Assistance Programs, we are reducing the energy burden for Minnesotans who have been spending too much of their incomes to keep their homes cool in the summer and warm in the winter,"** said Lieutenant Governor Flanagan. **"The ECO Act expands our commitment to low-income consumers and puts Minnesota at the forefront of the Green Energy economy, helping to ensure that all Minnesotans benefit from our state's energy policies."**

**"We know that when we make conservation investments in a home or business, it saves the home or business owner money. It reduces overall energy demands across the entire state,"** said Commerce Commissioner Grace Arnold. **"We also know that investing in energy conservation boosts the economy. For every \$1 invested in energy conservation, there is a \$3.75 return on investment for Minnesotans."**

The ECO Act updates and expands Minnesota's Conservation Improvement Program (CIP). CIP helps Minnesota households and businesses use electricity and natural gas more efficiently conserving energy, reducing carbon dioxide emissions, and lessening the need for new utility infrastructure. The changes to CIP include expanding eligibility for low-income households, requiring energy efficiency improvements for public schools in utility plans, increasing conservation goals for investor-owned utilities, and providing additional flexibility for cooperatives in meeting their conservation requirements and reducing paperwork requirements.

Through CIP, the ECO Act creates local jobs through electrical, heating and cooling, ventilation, and insulation installation projects across the state. These projects are typically designed and carried out by local businesses and installed by state licensed contractors, using locally sourced products.