

Emmer addresses energy policy, transportation, broadband

U.S. Rep. Tom Emmer (R–MN) headlined Cooperative Network’s Electric Sector Meeting, Aug. 9, in St. Cloud. The gathering of about 125 Minnesota electric cooperative leaders was held in conjunction with the Minnesota Rural Electric Association’s Energy Issues Summit.

Emmer’s remarks focused on how U.S. energy policy impacts costs, regulations, taxes, and the various modes of transportation used to move energy commodities. He also discussed rural broadband and his role as a member of the Rural Broadband Caucus.

Brian McClung and Katharine Tinucci from MZA+Co also spoke at the event, providing an update on the 2016 national and state elections. Cooperative Network offered a review of the 2016 legislative session.



U.S. Rep. Tom Emmer (center) met with electric co-op leaders to discuss key federal issues for utilities and rural communities. Emmer is pictured with Cooperative Network Director of Government and Member Relations Patrick Murray (left) and President and CEO Tom Liebe (right).

2016 Co-op Month: Cooperatives Build

Every October, cooperatives across the nation celebrate Co-op Month with special member events, community activities, and customer giveaways or discounts. This year’s theme, “Cooperatives Build,” invites cooperatives to share with their members and the general public how they build jobs, community, trust, a better world, and more.

Cooperative Network was proud to have led a first-of-its-kind national Co-op Month committee through the Cooperative Communicators

Association to develop the 2016 Co-op Month campaign together with representatives from a dozen co-op associations, cooperatives, and other groups. The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, National Cooperative Business Association, and Minnesota Cooperative Education Foundation were among those represented in the group.

Visit coopmonth.coop to access the free, customizable posters, social media graphics, videos, sample advertisements, and more.

Murray discusses state legislative efforts at Wright-Hennepin

Cooperative Network’s Patrick Murray joined U.S. Rep. Tom Emmer (R–MN), Sen. Mary Kiffmeyer (R–Big Lake), Rep. Jim Newberger (R–Becker), and Rep. Marion O’Neill (R–Maple Lake) to provide an update on co-op issues from the 2016 legislative session to cooperative business and elected officials at Wright-Hennepin Cooperative Electric Association’s headquarters in Rockford, Minnesota, on Aug. 23. Wright-Hennepin officials led a discussion of the national, state, and regional energy landscape, and Cooperative Network reviewed several priorities recently passed into law, including legislation that sets reasonable rail crossing standards for electric and telecommunication cooperatives. Representatives from the Minnesota Rural Electric Association and Great River Energy also addressed attendees.



CO-OPS PROVIDE 2.1 MILLION JOBS IN THE U.S.

- ▶ Co-ops create annual wages of over \$75 billion.
- ▶ Co-op farmers provide more than 190,000 jobs and annual wages over \$8 billion.
- ▶ Electric cooperatives employ more than 75,000 Americans and account for more than one third of the U.S. electric utility industry.

CO-OP MONTH | OCTOBER 2016

Dayton opts for no special session

Gov. Mark Dayton announced last month there would be no special session this year. With the GOP-led House opposed to funding the Twin Cities' Southwest Light Rail Transit and the DFL's insistence that state aid be included in a special session, party leaders were unable to overcome the impasse for a special session.

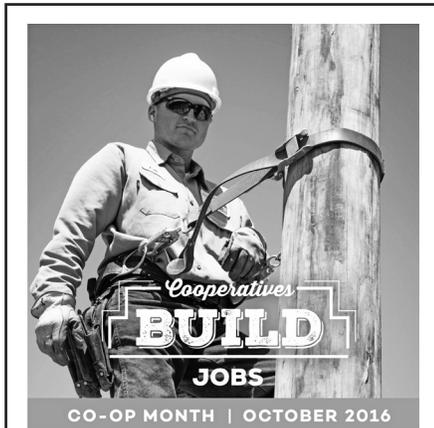
It has been standard practice in recent years that the governor, House

and Senate leadership agree on special session parameters, but only the governor has the authority to call a special session. Talks had ebbed and flowed this summer among Dayton, House Speaker Kurt Daudt (R-Crown), and Senate Majority Leader Tom Bakk (DFL-Cook). There was a breakthrough in July when Dayton indicated he would acquiesce in his request that additional spending on state programs be a condition for holding a special session. Party leaders emerged from that meeting with tentative plans to gather again in St. Paul in August. At stake were three major pieces of legislation left unresolved when the regular session ended in May—the tax, bonding, and transportation finance bills.

In the end, party leaders were not able to come to an agreement, and legislators have refocused their efforts on the 2016 elections.

Stray voltage guide re-examined

When farmers and utility companies work together, stray voltage concerns are more likely to be satisfactorily resolved. That has been the guiding sentiment among a taskforce that published the Minnesota Stray Voltage Guide last year. Cooperative Network and the Minnesota Rural Electric Association served on the taskforce together with other stakeholders. The living document, which has been accessed online by more than 1,350 visitors, outlines the steps farmers, licensed electrical contractors, utilities, and their advisers can take to discover and resolve stray voltage concerns on livestock farms. Cooperative Network and other stakeholders met Aug. 29 to review the information in the guide and to discuss ways it could be improved. The guide is available at minnesotastrayvoltageguide.com.



Have a job to post?

**Let us know,
and we'll help
spread the word!**

Send your listings to
[jenny.bernhardt@
cooperativenetwork.coop](mailto:jenny.bernhardt@cooperativenetwork.coop)

Cooperative Network **Capsule**

Prepared monthly to provide timely information on matters pertaining to Minnesota's non-profit, consumer-owned rural electric cooperatives.

Cooperative Network

145 University Ave. West, Suite 450
St. Paul, MN 55103-2044
(651) 228-0213
www.cooperativenetwork.coop

Ykema receives co-op scholarship

Samantha Ykema of Jasper, Minnesota, was recently awarded a 2016 Edward Slettom Cooperative Leadership Scholarship by the Minnesota Cooperative Education Foundation (MCEF), the nonprofit arm of Cooperative Network.

Ykema has participated in Sioux Valley Energy's EmPOWER Youth Leadership Program and Cooperative Network's Co-ops Yes! Youth Leadership Conference, where she was elected by her peers to serve on the 2016-17 youth board. She plans to attend the University of Minnesota-Duluth to study environmental science.

"Through her involvement and leadership, we believe Samantha exhibits the qualities co-ops seek to ensure a strong foundation for their future," said Tom Liebe, MCEF president. "We are proud to support her studies with this scholarship."

Awards are based on scholastic achievement, leadership, and ability to contribute to cooperatives in the future. This is the 12th year the scholarship has been awarded.



As a Co-ops Yes! youth board member, Samantha Ykema recently toured Dairyland Power Cooperative in La Crosse, Wisconsin, pictured above.



www.mcef.coop