

April 3, 2025

Minnesota House of Representatives
Committee on Energy Finance and Policy
Capitol 123
Saint Paul, MN 55155

RE: House File 1859 – One-mile Setback for Wind Energy Systems

Dear Chair Swedzinski, Chair Acomb, and committee members,

On behalf of Clean Energy Economy MN (CEEM), we write today to strongly oppose HF 1859, which would impose a one-mile setback requirement for wind energy projects from residences. This unnecessary restriction would significantly hinder energy growth in Minnesota and undermine the well-established process for siting wind projects.

CEEM is an industry-led, nonpartisan, non-profit organization representing the business voice of energy efficiency and clean energy in Minnesota. We are focused on educating Minnesotans about the economic benefits of transitioning to a clean energy economy. Our business membership comprises over 70 clean energy companies ranging from start-up businesses to Fortune 100 and 500 corporations that employ tens of thousands of Minnesotans across the state. CEEM stands committed to delivering a 100% clean energy future where all Minnesota businesses and citizens will thrive.

Minnesota already has a rigorous regulatory framework in place through the Public Utilities Commission (PUC), which carefully evaluates wind projects based on science, community input, and landowner agreements. These projects are developed in partnership with local stakeholders—landowners voluntarily participate, and communities have a voice in shaping these developments. A broad, arbitrary buffer disregards this process, limiting landowners' rights to use their property as they see fit and stifling economic opportunities for rural communities.

Additionally, Minnesota has decades of experience safely siting wind projects under existing guidelines. Extensive studies, expert analysis, and real-world data confirm that the current setback standards effectively balance community concerns, land-use rights, and energy needs. A one-mile buffer would severely restrict wind energy development, driving investment and job creation out of the state while making it harder to achieve Minnesota's clean energy goals.

Rather than imposing a one-size-fits-all restriction, we urge policymakers to continue relying on the established PUC review process, which ensures responsible siting based on science and community engagement. We appreciate your attention to this important issue and welcome the opportunity to discuss how we can continue Minnesota's leadership in clean energy while respecting local, expert, and community decision-making as well as landowner rights.

Sincerely,



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