



April 6, 2022

Re: Support of House Climate and Energy Omnibus Bill HF3337

Chair Long and committee members,

Vote Solar is a non-profit advocacy policy organization working to repower our communities with sunshine and build a thriving clean economy with affordable solar energy for all. I am the Midwest Regional Director for Vote Solar and a lifelong resident of Minnesota, and I am writing in support of HF3337 – Climate and Energy Omnibus Bill.

The Climate and Energy Omnibus bill presented by Chair Long offers a unique opportunity to move the needle forward on Minnesota's clean energy and equity goals. The funds invested in weatherization, solar energy, storage, and community programming will reap rewards for individuals and communities – they will produce clean energy, create livable wage jobs, reduce harmful pollution, and provide for a resilient future.

Rooftop solar and community solar garden applications provide families and businesses with predictable energy savings and additional financial security. It is vital that we maintain current incentive programs and open new avenues for Minnesota's residents to benefit from local clean energy. We can do this by providing targeted incentives for low-income families, providing job training for clean energy careers, and offering innovative financing for direct and indirect clean energy investments.

Expanding solar energy usage on public buildings and schools is a key component of a just transition to a 100% clean energy future. There are a variety of reasons why it is often not feasible for a public entity to opt into solar without the support of grants or incentive programs. Most public entities operate under fixed budgets and do their best to care for the needs of citizens with constrained resources. The funds outlined in the omnibus bill will assist public entities and school districts in furthering their goal of serving the public by installing cost-saving solar energy systems. The reduced energy burden and environmental benefits realized by installing solar on public buildings are crucial in creating a healthier climate and thriving communities.

When coupled with energy storage applications solar provides essential health, economic, and resiliency benefits to communities. Energy storage incentives are an important step towards further advancing clean, distributed, equitable energy. Local clean energy plus storage can also minimize the need for expensive transmission and distribution infrastructure, contributing to lower operating costs.

Consequently, these technologies help to create a more equitable grid. When paired with provisions such as workforce diversity programming, environmental impact assessments and resiliency programs,



and low-income incentives these provisions can help rectify environmental injustices and support a just transition of our energy supply. A just transition will lift up low-income families and reduce their energy burden while spreading economic investment across neighborhoods and ensuring that everyone can benefit from local clean energy. To create equitable outcomes we must proactively support programs that help disadvantaged communities adopt, and benefit from, solar and storage.

I urge committee members to support the Climate and Energy Omnibus Bill. The need to invest in our collective clean, equitable and independent energy future is urgent. The provisions included in this bill will put us on the right path towards a just 100% clean energy future while at the same time providing tangible benefits across all of Minnesota's communities.

Thank you,

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