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Minnesota House Commerce Finance and Policy Committee
449 Minnesota State Office Building
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Stephenson and Committee Members,

My name is Margaret Cherne-Hendrick and I am writing to you today on behalf of Fresh Energy. Fresh Energy is a thirty-year-old, Minnesota based nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that is working to achieve equitable carbon neutral economies. We appreciate the opportunity to speak with you today regarding House File 2100.

Minnesota has made progress reducing emissions for our power and transportation sectors. However, to avoid the worst impacts of climate change, we must now turn our attention to other sectors of the economy, like buildings. Buildings are one of the largest contributors to greenhouse gas emissions and account for about 40 percent of emissions nationally.

Making our schools more energy efficient and less reliant on fossil fuels is a fantastic opportunity to pursue the many co-benefits of improved indoor air quality, a healthier learning environment, cost-savings for school districts, jobs, and greenhouse gas emissions reductions. For example, geothermal energy systems can be up to eight times more energy efficient than natural gas systems. These systems work especially well in cold climates because they rely on the constant temperature of the Earth, therefore providing heating and cooling reliably through extreme heat in summers and extreme cold in winters. Their vastly superior efficiency also confers lower energy bills and puts less pressure on the electric grid as we see electrification across other sectors of the economy continue to advance.

Fresh Energy supports House File 2100, and believes it is an important investment in our students, public health, our workforce, and the climate. We look forward to continuing to work with the author and stakeholders to ensure we can maximize the co-benefits of this program.

Sincerely,

Margaret Cherne-Hendrick, PhD
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