



March 13, 2023

Minnesota House of Representatives
Climate and Energy Finance and Policy Committee
RE: House File 2524 Minnesota Energy Alley Bill

Dear Chair Acomb, Vice Chair Kraft, Minority Lead Swedzinski, and Committee Members,

The Agricultural Utilization Research Institute (AURI) serves entrepreneurs and small businesses across Minnesota as they add value to agricultural products through new product and process innovations across the food, bioindustrial products and renewable energy sectors.

I write today to express support for HF2524, the Minnesota Energy Alley legislation. This proposal will establish an energy innovation program to strengthen Minnesota's energy and economic development future. These efforts would be synergistic to AURI's efforts through programs such as its Renewable Energy Roundtable program that work with the Department of Commerce, Department of Agriculture, University of Minnesota and Minnesota State Colleges to identify, advance and commercialize biomass based renewable energy opportunities.

This investment in renewable energy for Minnesota is an investment in the next generation of solutions that will help the state achieve its 100% Clean Energy goal by 2040 and a net-zero economy by 2050.

At AURI we often see the barriers that halt or slow innovative solutions. The Minnesota Energy Alley can help remove those barriers and help partners and collaborators better leverage federal programs to accelerate opportunities to the commercial market.

AURI supports HF2524, the Minnesota Energy Alley Bill. This bill addresses a gap in our renewable energy ecosystem and creates synergies with AURI efforts, while advancing economic development opportunities that can leverage the surge in private and federal investments taking place currently.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Shannon M. Schlecht
Executive Director



March 13, 2023

Minnesota House of Representatives
Climate and Energy Finance and Policy Committee
State Office Building, Rm. 200
Saint Paul, MN 55155

RE: House File 2524, Minnesota Energy Alley Bill

Dear Chair Acomb, Vice Chair Kraft, Minority Lead Swedzinski, and Committee Members:

As an organization supporting energy solutions and technology deployment, I write today to express my strong support for HF2524, the Minnesota Energy Alley legislation. This proposal will establish an energy innovation program, which will strengthen Minnesota's energy and economic development future. This strategic investment will elevate Minnesota's competitiveness in a way that is good for business, workers, private investors, and the environment, all while bolstering our state's economy.

Investing in Minnesota Energy Alley is a commitment to our state's energy and economic future. Today, energy entrepreneurs and emerging businesses have insufficient resources and support to commercialize and scale innovative energy technologies. Next generation technologies will help achieve 100% Clean Energy by 2040 and a net-zero economy by 2050.

CEE currently manages the Minnesota Energy Technology Accelerator (META), a program filed with the Department of Commerce and funded by our state's utilities. META introduces commercially available technologies, and systematically reduces barriers for these technologies so that utilities can more quickly adopt them into their efficiency programs, and businesses and homeowners can more rapidly take advantage of them. However, there is still a need for Minnesota to support an ecosystem that incubates *new* companies developing *new* technology that could end up as the commercially available technology of tomorrow. HF 2524 does just that. Homegrown emerging technologies will not only help our state make the energy transition, but it will also help us create more jobs here in Minnesota.

I respectfully ask you to support HF2524/SF2249, the Minnesota Energy Alley Bill. This bill addresses an important gap in our state's emerging energy and tech ecosystem.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Duffrin', is written over a light blue circular stamp.

Chris Duffrin, President



408 Saint Peter Street, Suite 350
Saint Paul, MN 55102

PHONE 651 225 0878

EMAIL info@fresh-energy.org

WEBSITE fresh-energy.org

March 15, 2023

Minnesota House of Representatives
Climate and Energy Finance and Policy Committee
593 State Office Building
100 Rev Dr Martin Luther King Jr Boulevard
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Acomb 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 30-year-old, Minnesota based non-partisan, non-profit organization that is working to achieve equitable, carbon neutral economies by 2050. We appreciate the opportunity to support House File 2524, the Minnesota Energy Alley Bill.

To reduce greenhouse gas emissions at the pace and scale needed to meet the climate emergency, Minnesota must commit to rapid acceleration of market development of innovative clean energy solutions. Spurring market development requires investment in innovative clean energy solutions. However, today energy entrepreneurs and emerging businesses in Minnesota have insufficient resources and support to commercialize and scale innovative energy technologies.

Energy Alley will establish a centralized energy innovation program designed specifically to make such investments. The program will streamline the funding process, allowing for faster, greater deployment of capital. As clean energy projects get off the ground and the clean energy workforce grows, these initial investments will de-risk future investments in clean energy solutions and thus promote faster deployment, adoption, and market penetration.

This strategic investment will elevate Minnesota's competitiveness as a go-to region for advancing and transforming our energy ecosystem while spurring business support, workforce development, leveraging private investment, and bolstering our state's economy. It will also position the state as a leader in charting the path towards a just and equitable energy transition as well as allow Minnesota to capitalize on complimentary federal funding and programs.

Fresh Energy strongly supports HF2524, the Minnesota Energy Alley legislation. We believe this proposal is vital in establishing an energy innovation program, which will strengthen Minnesota's energy and economic development future.

We thank Representative Kraft for authoring and appreciate the opportunity to weigh in on this important issue. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Margaret Cherne-Hendrick, PhD
Senior Lead, Innovation and Impact
Fresh Energy
cherne-hendrick@fresh-energy.org

March 13, 2023

Minnesota House of Representatives
Climate and Energy Finance and Policy Committee
State Office Building, Rm. 200
Saint Paul, MN 55155

RE: House File 2524/Senate File 2249, Minnesota Energy Alley Bill

Dear Chair Acomb, Vice Chair Kraft, Minority Lead Swedzinski, and Committee Members,

I served the State of Minnesota in multiple agencies for over 33 years at the forefront of public and private sector sustainable development and green economy initiatives. Much of this work focused on accelerating sustainability practices, incubating clean technology enterprises, renewable energy applications, sustainable industrial development approaches, and advancing the Circular Economy.

The commercialization process is a challenging journey for any venture. From concept, business case, and prototype development, through pilot testing leading to scale-up production, market development and penetration. The more innovative and disruptive the technology or product, the more difficult it is to succeed in this journey. Today, energy entrepreneurs and emerging businesses have insufficient resources and support to commercialize and scale innovative energy technologies. Historically Minnesota economic development entities and strategies have lacked the technical and financial ability to shepherd promising early-stage ventures to full commercialization.

The urgency of the climate crisis and pursuit to achieve nebulous clean energy and climate goals is an existential challenge. Emerging technologies across our economic sectors will play a pivotal role in our state's energy transition. Not just energy but less resource intensive water and food production systems will need targeted support to develop and establish the innovations needed to achieve a transformed economy. Water efficiency is key to saving energy and addressing climate change and will need solutions that interface with energy. An example is thermal energy systems that require water efficient hydronic technologies.

I write today to express strong support for HF2524/SF2249. This bill addresses an important gap in our state's energy and tech ecosystem. Minnesota must act now to avoid missing the unique opportunity for business and economic development to leverage the surge in private and federal investments currently taking place. This proposal will establish an energy innovation program, which will strengthen Minnesota's energy and economic development future. This strategic investment will elevate Minnesota's competitiveness as a go-to region for advancing and transforming our energy ecosystem while spurring business support, workforce development, leveraging private investment, and bolstering our state's economy.

I also express strong support for two other bills that establish assistance capacity beyond State Agency programs. SF2301/HF2306 Minnesota Climate Innovative Finance Authority and SF2462/HF2147 Center for Microgrid Research.

Thank you for your consideration.

Timothy Nolan tmn195515@gmail.com

 **Gichi Ka** LLC Strategic Sustainability Advisory Services



March 13, 2023

Minnesota House of Representatives
Climate and Energy Finance and Policy Committee
State Office Building, Rm. 200
Saint Paul, MN 55155

RE: House File 2524/Senate File 2249, Minnesota Energy Alley Bill

Dear Chair Acomb, Vice Chair Kraft, Minority Lead Swedzinski, and Committee Members,

As a leading economic development organization representing five counties in Central Minnesota, I write today to express my strong support for HF2524/SF2249, the Minnesota Energy Alley legislation. This proposal will establish an energy innovation program, which will strengthen Minnesota's energy and economic development future. This strategic investment will elevate Minnesota's competitiveness as a go-to region for advancing and transforming our energy ecosystem while spurring business support, workforce development, leveraging private investment, and bolstering our state's economy.

Investing in Minnesota Energy Alley is a commitment to our state's energy and economic future. Today, energy entrepreneurs and emerging businesses have insufficient resources and support to commercialize and scale innovative energy technologies. These are the next generation of solutions that will help achieve 100% Clean Energy by 2040 and a net-zero economy by 2050.

Minnesota is home to 58,000 clean energy jobs. Those jobs have historically grown at a rate nearly twice as fast as overall state job growth. Importantly, 1 in 3 of these jobs are in Greater Minnesota. We know that emerging technologies across our economic sectors will play a pivotal role in our state's energy transition that adds value to rural economic prosperity and environmental stewardship.

As an economic development professional, I ask you to support HF2524/SF2249, the Minnesota Energy Alley Bill. This bill addresses an important gap in our state's energy and tech ecosystem. Minnesota must act now in order to avoid missing out on a once-in-a-generation opportunity for business and economic development opportunities to leverage the surge in private and federal investments currently taking place. Finally, support of this bill is supporting Minnesota's transition to a clean energy economy.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Cheryal Lee Hills'.

Cheryal Lee Hills, Executive Director

Bridging Relationships & Resources

200 1st Street NE Suite 2, Staples, MN 56479 | 218.894.3233 | regionfive.org

VESSYLL

March 14, 2023

Minnesota Senate
Committee on Energy, Utilities, Environment, and Climate
3109 Minnesota Senate Building
95 University Avenue W
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Re: Senate File 2249: Energy Alley

Dear Chair Frentz, Senator Xiong, and Committee Members,

My name is Zahra Hargens Iliff and I am the CEO and co-founder of Vessyll. I write to you today to offer our support for the Minnesota Energy Alley bill (SF 2249).

We are an energy startup building a clean energy storage device in Saint Paul, Minnesota. Our storage device acts as a backup generator, as well as a cost savings device. It can help customers avoid peak power usage, deal with power outages, and manage critical power loads in locations such as medical facilities and manufacturing plants. Our battery is unique in the market because it is lithium iron phosphate, not lithium ion, which means it is lower cost, safer, and lasts longer. Storage solutions like ours make the electricity grid more adaptable, which ultimately helps our state achieve the goal of 100% clean energy by 2040.

We launched our business in 2020 because we saw a gap in the marketplace for a product that could help businesses, families, and the environment. As we got started, we competed in the MN Cup pitch competition and have been fortunate to receive some small grants from DEED and LaunchMN. But like many hardtech energy startups, we face significant challenges to get our product built, find investors, and secure our first customer.

These challenges are different for energy startups because customers and investors want to see a demonstrated product in real-world applications, but getting that first demonstration is incredibly difficult. This is often referred to as the commercialization valley-of-death, where startups fail trying to secure pilots and early-stage funding.

For us, a program like Minnesota Energy Alley would make a significant difference in providing us the connections and resources uniquely designed for energy/hard tech startups. CEEM has provided us with aspects of this support, serving as champions and connectors. But we realize that expanded resources are needed to enable the pilot projects and help them reach and support many more energy businesses. In the absence of this funding and targeted programming, businesses like ours are not set up to succeed based on merit, we are mostly on our own, which means it may take many years longer to enter the market, if we make it at all.

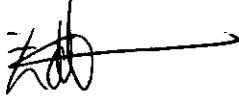
CEEM, Grid Catalyst, and other partners in this work can make all the difference to helping energy startups like ours find success in Minnesota. We want to stay here. We want to grow here. We want to

VESSYLL

build and hire here. I respectfully ask for your support of SF 2249. We hope you will move Minnesota Energy Alley forward so Vessyll and other energy startups can thrive in Minnesota.

Thank you Chair Frentz, Senator Xiong, and the Committee for considering this letter of support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Zahra Iliff', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Zahra Iliff
CEO/Founder
Vessyll
zahra@vessyll.com