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Testimony to the House Energy Committee on HF9

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I'm Peter Wagenius, Legislative Director for Sierra Club's North Star Chapter representing 50,000 members and supporters working to help our state's communities flourish through environmental protection.

We oppose HF 9 and any other proposed rollbacks on the 100% Clean Electricity Law.

I share concerns raised earlier by allied environmental organizations, so I'd like to focus on the uncritical endorsement of carbon capture in HF9.

We don't have time to waste on false climate solutions that this legislation would invite. Journalists like Amy Westerveldt have documented how polluting fossil fuel industries have taken their standard practices such as using carbon dioxide to push more oil out of the ground (also called Enhanced Oil Recovery) and rebranded it as "carbon capture."

As much as we oppose the categorical endorsement of industrial carbon capture in HF5, neither do we support a categorical rejection. It may be that after asking key questions, some forms of carbon capture, more likely in hard-to-electrify sectors of heavy industry like steel and cement, make sense. Perhaps Minnesota could lead in green steel, if we ask the right questions.

But HF9 doesn't ask any questions of Big Oil or Big Ag, who have increasingly joined forces to slow down the common threat to their profits, which is electric vehicles.

The ethanol industry, in its quest for ever larger subsidies, developed a plan to partially capture carbon dioxide from their ethanol plants and ship it by pipeline to North Dakota, where it will be used by their oil drilling partners for enhanced oil recovery.

With the bill, we run the risk of supporting such industry plans whose primary goal is not to reduce emissions in the real world, but simply to reduce their carbon intensity (CI) scores on paper (as modeled by GREET) and secure federal subsidies through 45Q.

With the cost of truly green technologies (like solar, wind and energy storage) continuing to plummet, we can easily envision a future where we have declared independence from both polluting ethanol and polluting fossil fuels and SAVED money for Minnesotans in the process.

But HF9 is not a declaration of independence. It is a declaration of gullibility. It says Minnesotans will fall for any scheme, from Big Oil or Big Ag or any other polluter and not ask any questions.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.