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

Dear Chair Klevorn and Committee Members,

My name is MK Anderson and I am writing to you 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. We appreciate the opportunity to express our support of HF2405 and HF2406.

We are on the precipice of an economy-wide, technological revolution with respect to the rapid deployment of emerging technologies that will help us to meet state, federal, and global decarbonization targets. The federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, Inflation Reduction Act, and CHIPS and Science Act are three historic investment opportunities that we must leverage to ensure that Minnesota is not left behind in this clean energy transition.

The billions of dollars of federal funding opportunities available are crucial to enabling long overdue upgrades and resiliency improvements to Minnesota's infrastructure. However, these funds are being made available on a wide range of timelines, are being administered through several different federal agencies, and have varying eligibility criteria. Many of these funds must be competitively won through grant applications, which require staff time and expertise. Fresh Energy has heard from municipalities, school districts, community organizations, and fleet managers that while they are aware that there is funding out there, they simply do not have the capacity to identify potential funding sources, put together an application, and if successful, administer and report on the funds. To ensure that Minnesotans can maximize available opportunities, the state should provide matching funds and a coordinated, inter-agency effort to support applicants across the state. House Files 2405 and 2406 would do just that.

Establishing an interagency advisory task force as well as hiring a coordinator to work with all relevant state agencies will ensure that Minnesota is strategic in maximizing the opportunity at hand. This coordination will increase access to federal funding for Minnesotans across the state while strengthening our infrastructure and making it more resilient for years to come. The task force and coordinator will ensure that Minnesota receives its fair share of federal funds, while enabling Minnesota to remain a market leader through deployment of new technologies made possible through this funding.

We would like to thank Representative Koegel for her leadership on this topic, and we appreciate the opportunity to offer our support for these bills. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

MK Anderson
Senior Policy Associate, Energy Transition, Fresh Energy
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