



Health Professionals for a Healthy Climate

February 15, 2023

Support for HF1656

Dear Chair Acomb and House Climate & Energy Finance & Policy Committee Members,

Health Professionals for a Healthy Climate (HPHC) supports HF1656 Minnesota State Competitiveness Fund establishment and appropriation. HPHC is a multidisciplinary network of over 500 Minnesota health professionals working for a healthy climate to protect public health. Globally, we are facing a climate emergency that increasingly puts our health in jeopardy. Climate effects, such as extreme heat, severe storms and flooding, wildfires, drought, and vector-borne diseases, are increasingly impacting the physical and mental health of Minnesotans, especially communities of color and low-income communities.

In 2018 fossil fuel air pollution was responsible for 350,000 premature deaths each year in the U.S.¹ Reducing air pollution saves lives and prevents asthma, heart disease and other chronic illnesses. It is critical that Minnesota invest in climate action to reduce air pollution and save lives, taking advantage of once-in-a-generation federal funding to support climate action in Minnesota. This bill will provide funding for our state agencies, set aside resources to cover Tribal, state, and local government match requirements, and assist smaller entities by providing the technical assistance resources necessary for them to compete for grant opportunities. We appreciate that this bill will help Minnesota's communities access hundreds of millions of dollars in federal investments that will make the places we live safer, healthier, more equitable, more affordable, and more resilient.

These investments will address health and climate equity by increasing access to good-paying green jobs, healthier and energy efficient homes, lower energy costs, clean transportation options, and resources to build community resilience and self-determination.

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¹ Fossil fuel air pollution responsible for 1 in 5 deaths worldwide. Environmental Research, 02/09/2021.
<https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/c-change/news/fossil-fuel-air-pollution-responsible-for-1-in-5-deaths-worldwide/>