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The Honorable Nick Frentz
Chair, Minnesota Senate Committee on Energy, Utilities, Environment and Climate
Minnesota Senate Building Room 3109
95 University Ave W.
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Chair Frentz and Committee Members,

Fresh Energy is a 30-year-old, Minnesota-based nonpartisan, not-for-profit organization. We work to shape and drive bold policy solutions to achieve equitable carbon-neutral economies. We appreciate the opportunity to offer our perspective on Senate File 1171 (Mathews).

Fresh Energy supports Senate File 1171 and encourages members to support its passage during the 2023 legislative session. Advanced nuclear technology is an emerging option for producing electricity without emitting carbon while in operation. Although not yet demonstrated at scale, this technology does have significant potential and is worth considering as a serious option as we continue the work of eliminating carbon emissions from the electric sector.

While we believe that wind, solar, and storage are likely to be the bedrock technologies for meeting Minnesota's new 100% carbon free standard, we also recognize that maintaining the reliability and affordability of our energy system is critical and will almost certainly require additional technology options for utilities and regulators to consider. Advanced nuclear could be one of those options, and a study such as the one proposed by this legislation would provide useful information to policymakers and other stakeholders as they work toward the critical goal of reliably and affordably decarbonizing electricity generation.

We additionally recommend to the bill author and committee that direct consultation with affected tribal governments be a priority as the bill moves forward, and that potential impacts on tribal communities would be an important addition to the proposed study scope if there is interest in such language from those communities.

Senate File 1171 does not commit Minnesota to any new technology choices in the future, but it does have the potential to provide valuable new insights and information in service of reliably and affordably decarbonizing our electric grid, and we support its passage.

Sincerely,

Allen Gleckner
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