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

Dear Chair Frentz 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 Senate File 2249, 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 SF2249, 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 Senator Xiong for authoring and appreciate the opportunity to weigh in on this important issue. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Margaret Cherne-Hendrick, PhD
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