

March 20, 2023

Minnesota State Senate  
Committee on Energy, Utilities, Environment and Climate  
Minnesota Senate Building, Rm 1150  
Saint Paul, MN 55155

RE: Senate File 2876, Solar\*Rewards funding & creation of an energy storage incentive

Dear Chair Frentz, Senator Mitchell, and Committee Members,

On behalf of Clean Energy Economy MN (CEEM), I write today in support of SF2876, a bill to increase funding for the Solar\*Rewards program and create an energy storage incentive program. We support this bill to provide additional funding for this popular program in order to expand customer access and provide the certainty needed for the planning and development of residential and small commercial solar.

CEEM is an industry-led, nonpartisan, non-profit organization representing the business voice of energy efficiency and clean energy in Minnesota. We work to educate Minnesotans about the economic benefits of transitioning to a clean energy economy and are committed to delivering a 100% clean energy future where all Minnesota businesses and citizens will thrive. Our business membership consists of nearly 50 clean energy companies ranging from start-up businesses to Fortune 100 and 500 corporations that employ tens of thousands of Minnesotans across the state.

As Minnesota moves to 100% carbon-free electricity by 2040, distributed generation like rooftop solar will play a key role in the transition. Rooftop solar brings additional value by generating power where it is consumed – not requiring expensive transmission lines to bring power from far away – and adds resiliency, which allows the grid to be more nimble and recover faster from outages. Providing this incentive for residential solar will help distributed generation become a bigger part of Minnesota's clean energy mix.

The innovative energy storage incentive program is the next step for assisting homeowners looking to expand their clean energy system with small-scale, behind-the-meter storage. The Solar\*Rewards program has been extremely successful in encouraging solar growth and this program will help the energy storage market expand. The development of this technology will be key to adding flexibility and resiliency to the grid while we move to a greater reliance on intermittent energy sources.

The solar industry employs nearly 5,000<sup>1</sup> Minnesotans, and the sector grew nearly 10% last year, significantly faster than the state average job growth. Statewide, 58,000 Minnesotans are employed in the clean energy economy with 69% of this workforce comprised of small businesses with fewer than 20 individuals. These incentives will help these small businesses continue to grow and thrive while allowing Minnesotans to take control of their energy bills and add resiliency with energy storage options.

We thank Sen. Mitchell for bringing this proposal forward and we thank Chair Frentz for the opportunity to share our support for this bill. We look forward to its passage. If you have any questions, please let us know.

Sincerely,



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<sup>1</sup> 2022 Clean Jobs Midwest Report: <https://www.cleanenergyeconomymn.org/clean-jobs-midwest>