



408 Saint Peter Street, Suite 350  
Saint Paul, MN 55102

PHONE 651 225 0878

EMAIL [info@fresh-energy.org](mailto:info@fresh-energy.org)

WEBSITE [fresh-energy.org](http://fresh-energy.org)

March 6, 2023

Minnesota Senate Environment, Climate and Legacy Committee  
3231 Minnesota Senate Building  
95 University Avenue W., Saint Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair, Hawj 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 466 (Champion) the Frontline Communities Protection Act.

Fresh Energy, in collaboration with the Frontline Communities Protection Coalition, supports the adoption of this bill to further address the cumulative impacts of pollution on communities on the frontlines of the climate crisis and environmental injustice. Many communities throughout Minnesota are living amidst pollution. Carbon emissions, as well as other pollutants from facilities, highways, and fossil fuel infrastructure are often sited in communities of color and economically disinvested communities. It is our neighbors across Minnesota that bear the greatest risk to public health, the environment, and economy and it is these cumulative impacts that continue to make these communities most vulnerable to the evolving climate crisis.

The Frontline Communities Protection Act strengthens the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's permitting process for approval of air permits in addressing the cumulative impacts of a new or existing facility by accounting for race, income, tribal status, and surrounding industry of the host community. In addition, this bill would allow for greater transparency by informing the public of proposed projects in their communities with detailed analysis of the cumulative impacts. With these improvements to the process, Minnesotans can gain more understanding of how a facility can benefit a community with measures to lessen impact to public health and the environment, or how it may compound harm.

This is an important opportunity for Minnesota to deepen its commitment to racial and environmental justice by instituting protections that could begin to alleviate the health and economic disparities that burden too many of our communities; and to align these commitments with Minnesota's climate goals.

We encourage members of the committee to support this legislation.

Sincerely,

Janiece Watts  
Director of Culture and Partnerships  
Fresh Energy  
[watts@fresh-energy.org](mailto:watts@fresh-energy.org)