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The Honorable Nick Frentz

Chair, Minnesota Senate Committee on Energy, Utilities, Environment and Climate

75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

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 5271 (Port).

Minnesota is firmly positioned as a leader in the deployment of clean energy, highlighted by our state's commitment to achieving 100 percent of our electricity from carbon-free sources by 2040. As we work toward meeting that goal, it is imperative that policymakers continue the work of reducing costs and removing barriers to implementation for clean and renewable sources of generation.

Minnesota is incredibly fortunate to be home to a well-established and growing solar industry. As the industry continues to serve an ever-increasing number of Minnesotans, a key challenge is navigating Minnesota's patchwork of approaches to local permitting. Working toward increased standardization and predictability in permitting across jurisdictions will help solar businesses more efficiently serve a greater number of customers wherever they happen to live. And of course, customers themselves deserve efficient and predictable decisions from their local government when they make the decision to invest in solar for their homes and businesses.

Senate File 5271 would establish an incentive program to support local governments utilizing SolarAPP+, an innovative software program developed by the National Renewable Energy Laboratory and currently in active use by communities around the country. Increasing the use of SolarAPP+ will help solar companies more efficiently operate throughout Minnesota, reducing overhead costs and increasing the speed at which solar can be deployed as one of our key strategies for achieving our 100% clean energy goals.

For these reasons, Fresh Energy supports Senate File 5271 and encourages members of the committee to do the same.

Sincerely,

Justin Fay

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