

March 26, 2025

Re: Community Solar's Big Local Benefits, please oppose S.F. 2855

Dear Chair Frentz and members of the committee,

When Minnesota created its community solar program, it unlocked opportunities for folks to benefit from clean energy beyond utility shareholders or those who owned a sunny rooftop. This benefit was on display in public comments filed in Public Utilities Commission Docket 13-867 in support of community solar, particularly by public institutions that have use the savings to the benefit of their residents:

Laurie Hokkanen, Chanhassen City Manager, told the Public Utilities Commission that the city **“projected significant energy savings credits over the term of our contracts. Those savings were invested in our community in many ways, including maintaining lower property tax levies.”**

Mankato Area Public School superintendent Dr. Paul Peterson wrote: “The Commission should recognize that **many subscribers to CSGs in Xcel's territory are municipalities**, whether cities, counties or school districts. As municipalities, each of these is dependent on revenues from taxation, which typically comes from local property levies or from state taxes passed through various appropriations...**The District presently has a positive contribution of approximately \$779,706 to its annual utility budget. For a large-sized school district, this is a significant amount.**”

Chris M. Meyer, Winona County Board Chair, wrote: “we are **concerned about the welfare of the taxpayers and 50,000 residents of Winona County [because we expected] \$2 million in savings over the duration of our community solar garden contracts.**”

Daniel R. Buchholtz, Administrator and Clerk/Treasurer of the City of Spring Lake Park wrote: “The City of Spring Lake Park has subscribed a significant portion of its energy use through the community garden program [with **expected savings of] \$1 million over the next 20 years...to invest in core services.**”

Revisions to the community solar law in 2023 strengthened the program's focus on access for public institutions and for those unable to benefit from direct solar ownership. Please don't end a program that has so much promise and benefit for Minnesota communities. Vote no.

Sincerely,

John Farrell, Institute for Local Self-Reliance
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