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March 25, 2025

Chair Nick Frentz
Energy, Utilities, Environment, and Climate Committee
95 University Avenue W.
St. Paul, MN 55155

RE: Concerns re: SF2855 and sunseting Community Solar Garden (CSG)

Dear Chair Frentz and members of the committee:

On behalf of Minnesota Famers Union (MFU), I write to share our concerns about SF2855 and our opposition to sunseting the Community Solar Garden (CSG) program. We have long supported this program as a means for farmers to host smaller energy projects, diversify their farm income, and contribute to bringing cleaner energy and more resiliency to our state's electric grid.

MFU is a grassroots organization that has represented Minnesota's family farmers, ranchers, and rural communities since 1918. Our members are among those on the front lines of climate change, experiencing some of it's early effects in the form of extreme weather, unpredictable growing seasons, and increased risk of plant and animal disease. In the face of these challenges—coupled with hightended economic uncertainty—our members are eager to find ways to remain financially resilient.

One opportunity some of our members have been eager to employ or explore is to diversify their farm income through leasing a portion of their land for CSG. Importantly, the size of these projects allows them to be deployed on marginal or less-productive land, and in a way that is complimentary to their existing operations. This can include incorporating grazing livestock to manage forage underneath solar panels or incorporating other agricultural functions.

Broadly, we believe programs that incent more distributed energy generation help spread out opportunities for energy income generation and make our grid and economy more resilient. Thank you for the opportunity to share our concerns and hope to earn your support for the CSG program and more distributed energy generation. If you have any questions, please contact our Government Relations Director, Stu Lourey, at stu@mfu.org or (320) 232-2047 (C). Thank you for considering the needs and perspectives of Minnesota's farm families.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gary Wertish". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Gary Wertish
President, Minnesota Farmers Union