



## **Health Professionals for a Healthy Climate**

Date: January 18, 2023

RE: Support for HF7/SF4

Health Professionals for a Healthy Climate (HPHC) supports HF7/SF4 to require that Minnesota utilities move to 100% Renewable Energy by 2040. HPHC is a multidisciplinary network of over 600 Minnesota health professionals working for a healthy climate to protect public health. Globally, we are facing a climate emergency that increasingly puts our health in jeopardy. Climate effects, such as extreme heat, severe storms and flooding, wildfires, drought, and vector-borne diseases, are increasingly impacting the physical and mental health of Minnesotans.

Climate change is also increasing our exposure to air pollution. Minnesota communities with higher percentages of lower income people, people of color, and indigenous people are exposed to higher levels of air pollution from all sources.<sup>1</sup> Fossil fuel pollution is responsible for 350,000 premature deaths each year in the U.S.<sup>2</sup> Reducing air pollution saves lives and prevents asthma, heart disease and other chronic illnesses.

The public health benefits of clean energy are substantial. Moving to carbon free energy could save Minnesota more than \$1.2 billion in avoided health costs between 2022 and 2040 by reducing pollution from power plants.<sup>3</sup>

In addition to improving health, a transition to clean energy will benefit BIPOC and low-income families by providing a pathway to well-paying green jobs and reducing energy costs. Moving to 100% renewable electricity by 2040 will accelerate Minnesota's path to our net zero future by 2050.

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<sup>1</sup> MPCA, The Air We Breathe, The State of Minnesota's Air Quality 2019.

<https://www.pca.state.mn.us/sites/default/files/Iraq1sy19.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Fossil fuel air pollution responsible for 1 in 5 deaths worldwide. Environmental Research, 02/09/2021.

<https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/c-change/news/fossil-fuel-air-pollution-responsible-for-1-in-5-deaths-worldwide/>

<sup>3</sup> On the Road to 100 Percent Renewables for Minnesota, COPAL, Union of Concerned Scientists, 2021.

Submitted by:

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