



Dear Chair Long, and Members of the Energy and Climate Finance and Policy Committee,

Health Professionals for a Healthy Climate is an organization of over 500 Minnesota physicians, nurses, psychologists, and public health professionals dedicated to the best possible health of our patients and our communities.

It is important to note that we are members of healthcare communities and institutions throughout Minnesota. As such, we are calling for your full support of Governor Walz's 100% Clean Energy by 2040. The declining costs of renewable energy and innovations help make the this plan well within reach.

The hottest ten (10) years on record have occurred in the last twenty (20) years. This destabilizing climate has brought weather catastrophes including high heat days, droughts and flooding, in addition to damaging tornadoes and wind storms.

As health professionals we are seeing more heat-related sickness and death, more disease related to mold and allergies, more deaths and morbidity in our population with pre-existing heart and lung disease, increases in asthma attacks with children and adults, pregnancy- related complications due to climate change, huge increases in infectious diseases transmitted by ticks and mosquitoes, and now we are seeing depression in the form of solastalgia. There is also an interrelationship between the pandemic and the environment, which reinforces the need to minimize our impact on the environment and be prepared for climate change.

Besides the huge impact to human health there is the added burden in terms of health care costs. Until policymakers take these added costs into their calculations there will be the tendency to not move with the urgency of the problem at hand. Think of it this way: it is always better for society to prevent a heart attack than it is to treat a heart attack.

Every year without action only increases the urgency to move swiftly on all efforts to reduce our dependency on fossil fuels for electricity, transportation, agriculture, and infrastructure.

The 100% Clean Energy by 2040 will enhance the health and safety of all Minnesotans while adding more new jobs to a burgeoning clean energy industry. It's vital that our legislators take decisive action to secure a safe clean energy future for our state.

Mike Menzel, M.D.
Health Professionals for a Healthy Climate