



March 22, 2022

Re: Support of HF 4404 & HF4402

Chair Long and committee members,

Vote Solar is a non-profit advocacy policy organization working to repower our communities with sunshine and build a thriving clean economy with affordable solar energy for all. I am the Midwest Regional Director for Vote Solar and a lifelong resident of Minnesota, and I am writing in support of HF4404 – a bill establishing a program to award grants for the installation of solar energy generating systems on public buildings – and HF4402 – a bill establishing an energy storage incentive program.

Expanding solar energy usage on public buildings is a key component of a just transition to a 100% clean energy future. There are a variety of reasons why it is often not feasible for a public entity to opt into solar without the support of a grant program such as the one proposed in HF4404. Most public entities operate under fixed budgets and do their best to care for the needs of citizens with constrained resources. This grant program will assist public entities in furthering their goal of serving the public by installing cost-saving solar energy systems. The reduced energy burden and environmental benefits realized by installing solar on public buildings are crucial in creating a healthier climate and thriving communities.

Energy storage adoption is vital in the pursuit of a just and equitable decarbonized future. Solar plus storage applications enhance the resiliency of the electric grid and potentially decrease the need for costly upgrades related to distributed energy resource adoption. If structured and incentivized appropriately, solar plus storage applications can also provide essential health, economic, and resiliency benefits to historically marginalized communities. The energy storage incentive framework outlined in HF4402 is an important step towards further advancing clean, distributed, equitable energy along with strengthening the reliability and resiliency of the grid.

I urge committee members to support HF4404 and HF4402. Together we can create a clean energy future that supports Minnesota's communities and provides benefits to individuals most affected by climate change, energy inequity, and environmental injustice.

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