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DIRECTOR'S LETTER  
MICHAEL NOBLE

I love that our Benefit Breakfast comes near the end of the year. Thanks to a virtual crowd of more than 475 guests, I—along with the entire Fresh Energy team—got a big boost of the positive energy we need to look ahead to the coming year and set ambitious goals amid our ongoing public health, climate, and economic emergencies.

This year, we were honored to welcome climate tech entrepreneur Donnel Baird—a rising star in the clean energy and climate solution industry. In our conversation, Donnel emphasized that retrofitting buildings to move them off fossil fuels confronts multiple societal crises by creating new family-supporting jobs, improving indoor air quality, and reducing carbon emissions. I couldn’t agree more.

This is exactly the kind of work we want to see more of right here in Minnesota, and it’s why Fresh Energy is committed to driving building policy and crucial energy code updates. In fact, our very own building performance director, Ben Rabe, has been appointed to an international codes committee to contribute his expertise in achieving greenhouse gas reductions through building code updates.

Donnel also highlighted the importance of climate solutions as a cornerstone to taking serious federal action on climate and economic recovery nationally and locally. Along with advocating for the federal level for forward-looking policy solutions to reach net-zero carbon emissions by mid-century, Fresh Energy is working to ensure that a portion of the more than $2 billion of American Rescue Plan dollars heading to Minnesota cities, counties, and towns is invested toward meaningful, local climate and clean energy action—including zero carbon transportation and equity-focused investments.

ENN REPORTER LAUDED FOR ENERGY SERIES

Energy News Network (ENN) reporter Kathiann Kowalski has been recognized with two Ohio’s Best Journalism first place awards for her years-long investigative reporting series unraveling the role of dark money and campaign contributions in Ohio’s infamous HB 6 scandal—a $1 billion bailout for Ohio’s two nuclear power plants that was signed into law in 2019. ENN and other media were protected and our communities thrive.

WHAT'S NEXT FOR CLEAN TRANSPORTATION?

When Minnesota officially became a clean cars state earlier this year, 13 years of work by Fresh Energy came to fruition. By adopting these stricter-than-federal tailpipe emissions standards, Minnesota has taken a significant step toward meeting our greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals while improving air quality and laying the foundation for more electric vehicle (EV) adoption. But we are not stopping there!

In tandem with our high-profile clean cars work, Fresh Energy’s policy experts have been pursuing myriad other policy-based solutions for advancing clean transportation of all kinds in the state. So what’s next for clean transportation? Here are some of our key goals for the next few years:

- **Pave the way to electrify transit and school buses.** From school kids to seniors, Minnesotans of all ages deserve access to clean, carbon-free public transportation. Fresh Energy is working at the agency and regional levels to ensure progress to spur equitable electric transit is underway across the state.
- **Map a path to zero emissions for medium- and heavy-duty vehicles.** Innovators right here in Minnesota—like Zeus Electric Chassis in White Bear Lake and Rosenbauer America in the city of Wyoming—are reshaping public understanding of how trucks, buses, and service vehicles can help clean up our transportation system. Fresh Energy is committed to helping Minnesota tackle emissions from all modes of transportation, and getting a handle on emissions from these types of vehicles is an important step.
- **Ensure equitable access to EV charging and electricity rates.** With the passage of Clean Cars Minnesota, more EVs will be on Minnesota roads, and it is imperative that EV charging rates and infrastructure policies are designed and implemented with equity front and center. Fresh Energy will be working at the Public Utilities Commission and beyond to file technical comments and push for equitable electric transportation deployment throughout the state.

There’s no quick fix for electrifying our transportation system. Fresh Energy is committed to pursuing a broad range of policies that will contribute to decarbonizing the rest of the transportation sector and transform the way we move our people and our goods so that our health and climate are protected and our communities thrive.

COMMUNITY DRIVEN

Florence Hedeen has spent her life volunteering and giving back in her community of Park Rapids, Minnesota. With the headwaters of the Mississippi in its backyard, her town has a reputation as a great place to experience the best of Minnesota outdoors. But over the last decade, Florence has seen firsthand a pressing new challenge arise in her region: climate change.

Since the 1970s, Florence and her husband Carter have prioritized maintaining and preserving their property, which now totals 200 acres. But their property is very different than it was 50 years ago.

“Due to climate change, pine trees will not survive here anymore and that’s a big change. For us it was a strong wake-up call. This is having a tangible effect on where we live.”

In addition to shifting how her family consumes energy, Florence is an active community member who always shows up to the town hall meetings and makes her legislators aware of steps she hopes they will take in our transition to clean energy.

Florence and her family support Fresh Energy because they know that action now will shape the Minnesota we leave to future generations. Join Florence and her family by making a Power Circle contribution of $1,000 or more today. Please contact Meggie LaValley at lavalley@fresh-energy.org.
Energy matters fall 2021

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