

# ENERGYMATTERS



## MINNESOTA HISTORY! LEADING FROM THE NORTH WITH 100%

February 7, 2023, marked a new day for clean energy and climate in the North Star State when Governor Tim Walz signed Minnesota's 100% clean electricity bill into law, committing all utilities to provide Minnesota customers with 100% carbon-free electricity by 2040.

### **The journey to 100%**

The Fresh Energy team has been working for a long time to make 100% the law of the land in Minnesota and dedicated hundreds of hours in January and February 2023 alone to help the bill on its journey. From consulting on the policies outlined in the bill, to working with legislators to find consensus, to undertaking a sweeping and proactive public education and engagement campaign—Fresh Energy has been involved every step of the way. So as you can imagine, February 7 marked a major day of celebration for our team. But historic moments like this do not happen in a vacuum.

### **Minnesotans spoke up**

For years, a broad coalition of advocacy groups—joined by Fresh Energy—have been collaborating to make 100% a reality. And in November 2022, Minnesotans from all corners of the state voted for climate action. From the grassroots to the grass tops, Fresh Energy has partnered

with many organizations, utilities, and political and business leaders, all working together to find common ground in this effort to make 100% a reality.

Additionally, this progress wouldn't have been possible without the commitment to energy and climate by bill authors Senator Nick Frentz and House Majority Leader Jamie Long—and all members of the Minnesota House and Senate who voted "yes" to pass 100%.

### **The work is just beginning**

An affordable and reliable carbon-free electric supply forms the foundation for Minnesota's work to cut carbon pollution in all sectors of our economy—including our buildings, transportation, industry, and beyond.

In the coming months, we will be working at the Minnesota Legislature to keep up the momentum set by 100% and finish the job securing state matching funds required to ensure Minnesota receives federal energy and infrastructure investments allocated to our state.

Learn more about 100% and send a note of thanks to legislators who voted for Minnesota's clean energy future at [fresh-energy.org/100percent](https://fresh-energy.org/100percent).





I've had the good fortune to experience many landmark moments for clean energy and climate in my career. But when Governor Walz signed the 100% clean electricity bill into law, the gravity of the moment took my breath away. Did you spot my huge smile on the cover photo? It's a good thing my time at the podium came *before* the signing!

Clean power generation is the bedrock of a carbon-free electricity supply. As the energy transition continues and we electrify everything we can, it's vital that the electricity we're using comes from carbon-free and renewable sources. And 100% will ensure just that.

**With three decades of experience under my belt, I know that 100% is just the beginning—a beginning made possible by thousands of Minnesotans who spoke up, future-focused leaders, and Fresh Energy supporters like you.**

You all know by now that I will be "rewiring" this spring and a lot of reflection and introspection goes hand-in-hand with a life change like that. And I can say without a doubt in my mind that I've had the best job in Minnesota. I was entrusted with leading a team of our state's best and brightest climate and energy champions for 30 years—how many people can say that?

Thank you for your support and please encourage your friends, family, and colleagues to get involved with Fresh Energy! The work is just beginning and it's never too late to join the movement for an equitable, clean energy future.

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## INVESTING IN CLEAN TRANSPORTATION



Members of the Fresh Energy team joined Vice President Kamala Harris on her visit last month to St. Cloud's New Flyer bus manufacturing facility, where she highlighted how federal funds are helping to build electric vehicles right here in Minnesota, creating good jobs and cleaner air for cities in our state and across the U.S.

Electrifying and changing how we get around is a crucial strategy for driving down emissions and reducing the harm from pollution borne most by under-resourced and communities of color in Minnesota. From mode shifting and reducing vehicle miles traveled, to getting more electric transit and school buses on the road, Minnesota needs a meaningful investment in clean transportation expansion and funding, which we are working hard to do at the state legislature and beyond.

## ENN SPOTLIGHTS UTILITY CORRUPTION IN OHIO



Energy News Network (ENN) reporter Kathiann Kowalski was a featured speaker at a Columbus Metropolitan Club forum on the role of dark money in Ohio's FirstEnergy corruption scandal. The event was co-organized by Eye on Ohio, which has partnered with ENN in Ohio since 2019.

The forum is part of ENN's ongoing coverage of the case around HB 6, dubbed "the worst energy bill of the 21st century," which gutted Ohio's clean energy standards and subsidizes coal plants. The live, in-person event was rebroadcast on local public television and radio. It was also featured in follow-up stories on the city's CBS and ABC affiliates.

## SUPPORTING JOB AND WEALTH CREATION



An important element of an equitable energy transition is creating good paying jobs and building wealth in communities most impacted by climate change.

To meet the moment, Fresh Energy is growing our Energy Access and Equity team to better engage in the economic development activities underway in our state's clean energy sector, especially those sparked by federal funding opportunities. This work will support job and wealth creation for all Minnesotans, with a focus on under-resourced communities, Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities, and those residing outside the Twin Cities metropolitan area. Stay tuned for updates.

# WHAT'S UP WITH HYDROGEN?



*Photo Credit: University of Minnesota*

Hydrogen has long been a source of hope for the development of a pollution-free economy. In fact, in 2003, President George W. Bush launched an initiative with the goal of powering U.S. cars, trucks, homes, and businesses with hydrogen!

We've come a long way since then in our understanding of hydrogen as a climate solution, and we know today that the best use for hydrogen is in our heavy industry sector—one of the most challenging sectors of the economy to decarbonize.

## Hydrogen and heavy industry

Today, demand for hydrogen is driven by its use in activities like ammonia production for fertilizer, as well as iron and steel making. Even though hydrogen is all around us, naturally occurring hydrogen gas is scarce and must be produced for our industrial uses. Unfortunately, most of the hydrogen we create comes from fossil fuels and is very carbon intensive. **This means that figuring out how to produce hydrogen cost effectively without using fossil fuels is a crucial climate solution.**

## The hydrogen kaleidoscope

There are many ways to produce hydrogen and they are categorized by color. For example, gray hydrogen is produced from natural gas, while pink hydrogen uses nuclear power. There are many more colors in the hydrogen kaleidoscope, but the type of hydrogen with the best opportunity for deep decarbonization is green hydrogen.

## Green hydrogen's climate potential

Green hydrogen is produced using carbon-free, renewable electricity to power an electrolyzer, which separates water into hydrogen gas and oxygen—as seen in the photo above from the University of Minnesota's West Central Research and Outreach Center. Green hydrogen production does not emit any carbon dioxide and at Fresh Energy, we believe it is the most promising technology for producing hydrogen and meeting our climate goals.

Given today's technological advancements and passage of the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), as well as new initiatives underway right here in Minnesota, conversations about the future of hydrogen are livelier than ever—and Fresh Energy is closely monitoring and engaging in these policy conversations. Learn more at [fresh-energy.org/whats-up-with-hydrogen](https://fresh-energy.org/whats-up-with-hydrogen).

## DONOR PROFILE | ERIC PASI



## THINKING GLOBALLY, ACTING LOCALLY

Fresh Energy board member and Power Circle donor Eric Pasi is living and breathing the climate movement. Driven by love for his family, his Tongan ancestral roots, and a passion for clean energy, Eric works as a solar developer, has published a book about clean energy careers, and is the creator of a climate-inspired music project called Palms Psalm.

Eric's personal climate journey also includes his commitment to Fresh Energy as a donor and board member. **"I give to Fresh Energy because I know my donation is making a huge impact. If you were to talk about dollars spent per gigaton of carbon displaced, there's no better value than Fresh Energy."**

With a deep understanding of the energy transition, Eric's dedication to Fresh Energy stems from his firm belief that Fresh Energy is filling a crucial space in the clean energy movement, pushing big policy initiatives forward and helping coalesce other voices around one of the biggest issues of our time.

You can find Eric's climate-inspired music on Spotify or catch him at a gig in the Twin Cities this summer. In the meantime, we hope you will join Eric in making a difference by becoming a Fresh Energy Power Circle donor.

To learn more, please contact Meggie LaValley at [lavalley@fresh-energy.org](mailto:lavalley@fresh-energy.org).





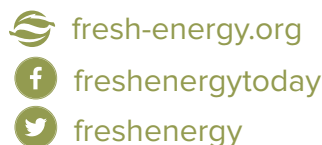
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UPCOMING ACTIVITIES | CELEBRATING MICHAEL NOBLE AND FRESH ENERGY

# THE REWIRING ARCHIVES

*Contribute to Michael Noble's retirement scrapbook*

Michael will be the first to tell you that he's not retiring, he's "rewiring!" And in celebration of his clean energy legacy and Fresh Energy's bright future, we have a few fun things up our sleeves.

**First, we're working on a scrapbook.** Do you have any photos of Michael from his 30 years in clean energy? From digital photos to newspaper clippings, and everything in between, we're collecting them all! Email your photos to Christine by March 15 at [mccormick@fresh-energy.org](mailto:mccormick@fresh-energy.org).

**Second, send your retirement regards to Michael.** Share some kind words, a memory, or even a doodle—we'll have them all on display at Michael's big bash. Notes can be submitted via a return card that will be mailed to you along with a party invite in April. You can also submit your note online at [fresh-energy.org/rewiring](https://fresh-energy.org/rewiring).

**Third, speaking of big bashes!** Mark your calendar for a party we're calling *100% FRESH* in Saint Paul on June 8, where we will celebrate all things Michael and Fresh Energy. More details coming soon.

