Centering Equity in Energy Efficiency Programs

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For 28 years, shaping and driving bold policy solutions to achieve equitable carbon-neutral economies.

**Fresh Energy is working to:**

- Decarbonize the electricity sector serving Minnesota
- Create a carbon-neutral economy through high-impact integrated solutions
- Ensure an equitable and just energy transition
- Build a shared commitment to climate action
- Strengthen public resolve for change
What do we mean by “equity?”

Equity means: elimination of barriers to full participation in the *process*, and access to the full benefits of the *outcome*.
Minnesota Multifamily Affordable Housing Energy Network (MMAHEN)

- Purpose: to increase energy efficiency and conservation in multifamily buildings in MN by improving and expanding the use and equitable access of available resources
- Started in July 2014
- 69 members from 41 organizations, including utilities, energy and housing advocates, housing owners and developers, service providers, city and state staff, and renters
Benefits of energy efficiency in under-resourced households and multifamily housing

- Reduced energy burden
  - Roughly 44% of all renters are cost burdened
  - Under-resourced Twin Cities households had median energy burden of 5.11% vs. 2.32% for non-under-resourced
- Increased health and comfort
- Long-term savings
  - Reduced energy/water bills and lower maintenance costs
- Energy burden: the proportion of household income spent on energy costs
- Under-resourced households, households in Greater Minnesota, and communities of color consistently face **disproportionately higher energy burdens**
Expanding access in utility programs

- Xcel Energy and CenterPoint Energy's joint Multi-Family Building Efficiency Program launched in 2015
  - Whole-building “one-stop-shop” program with a single implementer, historically marketed to building owners
  - Added Renter's Kits in 2020
- All investor-owned utilities proposed increased/expanded energy efficiency programs serving rental properties and under-resourced customers in the most recent planning cycle
- However, significant energy efficiency potential remains in this area
Encouraging deeper energy efficiency for all

- Proposal filed by Fresh Energy, National Housing Trust, and Natural Resources Defense Council
- **Would reward investor-owned utilities for higher performance** through programs serving under-resourced customers
- Minnesota Public Utilities Commission signaled initial support in Fall 2020; concept is being refined through stakeholder feedback and **will be brought back to the PUC for approval later this year**
- Looking ahead: potential updates to Minnesota’s **cost-effectiveness framework**
Building an inclusive and participatory process

• Engaging community members and impacted voices, especially those who are under-resourced, historically marginalized, and renters
• Identify and address barriers to participation
• Ensures that solutions work for everyone
Thank you!

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