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The Honorable Founj Hawj
Environment, Climate, and Legacy Committee
Minnesota Senate
75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Chair Hawj and Committee Members,

Fresh Energy is a 30-year-old, Minnesota-based nonpartisan, not-for-profit organization. We work to shape and drive bold policy solutions to achieve equitable carbon-neutral economies. We appreciate the opportunity to offer our perspective on Senate File 1690.

Minnesota's existing waste collection system does not properly address electronic waste, including battery waste. Senate File 1690 would establish a stewardship program for battery waste and represents an important next step towards addressing our state's broader electronic waste challenge.

Addressing climate change requires a broad set of strategies across sectors, including waste management. Electronic and battery waste presents both a growing challenge and opportunity for our state. As the importance of batteries as a tool in reaching our decarbonization and climate change goals continues to increase, so too does the urgency to implement effective collection and recycling practices. Improperly discarded batteries threaten both the health and safety of waste system workers, public health, and the surrounding environment. We also recognize that this waste stream contains valuable materials that could be reclaimed and reused in a variety of clean energy applications – recovering batteries and similar resources can help alleviate the need for new resource extraction.

Senate File 1690 represents an important next step towards addressing our state's battery waste challenge. For these reasons, we encourage members to support moving this important legislation forward this session.

Sincerely,
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