

March 20th, 2014

Senate Energy and Technology Committee
Michigan State Capitol
Lansing, MI 48933

Re: Michigan's Renewable Energy Standard

Dear Committee members:

I would like to start by highlighting the immense success of Michigan's Renewable Energy Standard since its implementation in 2008. According to the report on the implementation of P.A. 295 issued by the MPSC in February of this year **all but one of the electric utilities that filed Renewable Energy Plans (REP's) with the MPSC are expected to meet or exceed the 10 percent RE standard by 2015.** In fact the efforts have been so successful and cost effective that Consumers Energy (CE) is planning to eliminate its RE surcharge for customers and DTE Electric plans to reduce their surcharge from \$3 a month to only \$0.43 a month.

The proportion of Michigan's REC portfolio encompassed by wind energy grew by 12% from 2012 – 2013 and while much of this growth was initiated due to P.A. 295, there is good evidence that there's still ample room for continued growth in this niche. It is my hope that further development of wind energy and other clean RE production methods will become more common place across Michigan. Based upon my own education, the MPSC Report and continually emerging research on the topic; investments in clean energy technologies are a smart long-term plan for the state of Michigan. This is supported not only by their significantly lower carbon foot print than traditional fossil fuels, but also economically, as the price of fossil fuels are likely to continue to rise into the future as wind and solar prices continue to fall.

When compared with other feasible RE generation methods in Michigan, wind is the cheapest. In fact the only energy generation method cheaper in the "Readying Michigan to Make Good Energy Decisions: Renewable Energy" report released in November 2013 was natural gas. **While natural gas production has been a strong economic driver in other parts of the country, it should not be added to the RE portfolio as some states have done.** This is due to the simple fact that ultimately natural gas is a fossil fuel and not a renewable energy source. Like all fossil fuels, its production and use for energy emits a significant amount of green house gases and it is **a finite resource that cannot be regenerated naturally within a feasible human timescale and is therefore not a long term energy solution.**

The large scale success of this program is why I urge the committee to support raising Michigan's RE standard above 10%. Our current standard is the lowest in the country of any states that have Renewable Portfolio Standards and while a direct comparison between states is difficult, there is no reason based on the MPSC reports that we cannot achieve more ambitious goals. P.A. 295 has helped our state make great strides in diversifying our energy portfolio and decreasing our reliance on dirty energy sources. **We are moving in the right direction and I strongly support raising the bar even higher to 20% by 2025.**

Please raise Michigan's Renewable Energy Standard and keep the progress moving in the right direction.

Sincerely,

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