

**Minnesota Student Association
Position Statement Concerning Utility Planning (Adopted)
March 1, 2016**

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Supporters: MSA Sustainability Committee, UMN SUN Delegation, UMN Engineers Without Borders, Sustainable Systems Management Club, CEM Network, Environmental Student Association, Net Impact UMN, American Institute of Architecture Students of Minnesota (AIASM), Students for Sustainability, Fossil Free Minnesota, and UMN Energy Club, Political Affairs Student Association (PASA)

Concerning: Integration of renewable energy in future University of Minnesota planning

Whereas: The Board of Regents Policy, *Sustainability and Energy Efficiency*, states that “the University shall undertake a process to increase energy efficiency, reduce dependence on nonrenewable energy, and encourage the development of energy alternatives through research and innovation;”¹

Whereas: In 2008, the University of Minnesota signed on to the American College and University Second Nature Carbon Commitment and the Twin Cities campus has established a plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions 50% by the end of 2020 and is developing plans for 100% reduction, or carbon neutrality, by 2050;²

Whereas: The University of Minnesota recently issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for community solar garden subscriptions in March 2016;

Whereas: The 2009 University of Minnesota Twin Cities Campus Master Plan “embraces...greenhouse gas reductions through energy efficiency and use of renewable energy” and UMN Energy Management has proposed developing a new Utility Master Plan to commence within the next 18 months;³

Whereas: Recent changes in the University’s curriculum, including four climate-themed Grand Challenge Curriculum courses, demonstrate an increased academic emphasis on climate change and sustainability;⁴

¹ Board of Regents Sustainability and Energy Efficiency Policy: http://regents.umn.edu/sites/regents.umn.edu/files/policies/Sustain_Energy_Efficiency.pdf

² U of M Climate Action Plan: z.umn.edu/CAP

³ University of Minnesota Twin Cities 2009 Master Plan: https://cppm.umn.edu/sites/cppm.umn.edu/files/umtc_mp_2009.pdf

⁴ UMN Grand Challenge Curriculum Course Listings: <http://undergrad.umn.edu/curriculum/grand-challenge-courses.html>

Whereas: The Department of Energy Sunshot Initiative has funded the Solar University (SUN) Delegation, focused on researching ways to “encourage the University of Minnesota to install, or subscribe to, via community solar gardens, at least 1MW of solar PV for one or more of the University’s five campus locations;”^{5,6}

Whereas: The Minnesota B3 Sustainability Building 2030 Energy Standards, developed in collaboration with the University of Minnesota’s Center for Sustainable Building Research, will require new state-funded buildings to have zero net energy consumption by 2030;⁷

Whereas: The State of Minnesota has goals declared in statute to work towards reducing statewide carbon emissions by 80% by 2050 and 10% of electricity to come from solar energy by 2030;^{8,9}

Whereas: Minnesota law requires the University of Minnesota’s utility provider, Xcel Energy, to produce at least 30% of its electricity from renewable sources including wind, solar, and other renewable resources, by 2020, and at least 1.5% additionally from solar energy;¹⁰

Whereas: The Minnesota Department of Commerce-Division of Energy Resources has found that, “the addition of wind and solar (variable renewable) generation...can be reliably accommodated by the electric power system;”^{11,12}

Whereas: Capital building investments should consider the increasingly favorable financial return on investment that PV solar panels will have in the future, as these investments will serve the University over their decades of use;¹³

Decided: The Minnesota Student Association supports the University’s current efforts to promote sustainability and the inclusion of renewable energy investments in upcoming utility master planning.

⁵ Energy Transition Lab-SUN Delegation: <http://energytransition.umn.edu/the-university-of-minnesota-sun-delegation/>

⁶ Campus PV Development Roadmap: <http://energytransition.umn.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/CampusRoadmapFinal-with-cover.pdf>

⁷ B3 Sustainable Building 2030 Energy Standards: <http://www.b3mn.org/2030energystandard/>

⁸ Minnesota Statutes Section 216B.1691, Subd. 2f.

⁹ Ibid., 216H.02 Subd. 1

¹⁰ Ibid., 216B.1691, Subd.2f.

¹¹ MN Department of Commerce Integration and Transmission Study for the Future Renewable Energy Standard: <http://www.minnelectrans.com/documents/MRITS-report.pdf>

¹² Union of Concerned Scientists Report, “Advancing Minnesota’s Clean Energy Economy”: <http://www.ucsusa.org/sites/default/files/attach/2015/01/Advancing-Minnesotas-Clean-Energy-Economy-Full-Report.pdf>

¹³ Minnesota Value of Solar: <http://www.growsolar.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/MN-Value-of-Solar-Methodolgy.pdf>