

## **Health Professionals for a Healthy Climate Capitol Watch 1– January 12, 2019**

(Reminder – register now for HPHC’s HAPPY HOUR – January 23, 2018 - 5:30 - 7:30 pm (program at 6:30) details at <https://hphchappyhour.brownpapertickets.com> - seating is limited)

**Recently released reports**, the **IPCC Special Report 15 on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C** (sr15\_spm\_final.pdf) and **4<sup>th</sup> National Climate Assessment** (<https://nca2018.globalchange.gov/>), have elevated concerns that without extremely urgent and (frankly) monumental action across the globe, Global Warming and fossil fuel related pollution will wreak havoc on our societies and the biosphere at large. Unquestionably this is a public health care issue as the toll in morbidity and mortality is increasing and potentially will threaten millions of lives. In 2018 global carbon emissions rose at a record rate despite efforts to accelerate transition to renewable energy sources. Progress in renewables is being offset by increasing power demands and population growth, by carbon intensive transportation systems, deforestation, and other factors. Going forward carbon control is critical and every approach from administrative action to legislation to court intervention must be employed. HPHC continues our work of bringing the concerns of MN health care professionals and organizations to bear on these issues.

The MN legislature is entering the second week of the Session. DFL leadership has reconfigured House committees and appointed new Chairs (detailed in **HPHC Capitol Watch Pre-session #2 December 11, 2018**). Over 150 bills have so far been introduced and sent to various committees where discussion will begin this week.

Health professionals will be pressing legislators to make solid gains in carbon control a high priority. There are a number of policies we’d like to see approved this session:

- 1) Move MN to 100% renewable energy by 2050 and at least 50% renewable energy by 2030; increase the Energy Efficiency Standard and secure funding for public transit.
- 2) join 12 other states and DC as a “clean car state” by adopting CA vehicle emission standards and facilitating electric transportation options.
- 3) provide subsidies to assist Co-op utilities in their transition away from coal and for local gov’ts to convert to electric school buses and public safety fleets.
- 4) retrofit public buildings for efficiency and renewables.
- 5) remove barriers to participation in community solar programs
- 6) promote land-use policies that keep carbon ‘in-the-soil’ and help reduce water pollution
- 7) requiring the MN PCA to develop rules for a diminishing cap on carbon emissions.

**The Executive Branch:** **It is concerning that** Governor Walz has asked his new Commissioner of the Dept of Commerce (MNDOC) Steve Kelley to reconsider its legal appeal of the approval given to Pipeline 3 by the MN Public Utilities Commission (PUC). HPHC opposes this pipeline project as a danger to public health. We have

testified before the PUC, at legislative hearings, and in court to this effect. We're helping legislators understand the health issues involved and we strongly support MNDOC's challenge of the PUC decision in this matter.

[Background: a few month ago the MN Dept of Commerce (DOC) filed an appeal challenging last year the MN Public Utilities Commission, ignored the recommendations of its own Administrative Law Judge and gave approval of Enbridge Energy's Line 3 Replacement Tar Sands pipeline. MNDOC has opposed this project based on lack of demand for Tar Sands oil and the dangers of harmful effects on health and the environment. The attached MEP Fact Sheet has more details.]

**ACTION OPPORTUNITY:** call the Governor or Lt Gov. directly, expressing your concern as a health professional about this reconsideration of the Dept. of Commerce appeal. Share content on social media asking Governor Walz/Lt Gov Flanagan to side with science and health in making decisions on this and other fossil fuel projects. Twitter tags: @GovTimWalz, @LtGovFlanagan Hashtag: #StopLine3

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*With thanks to the MN Environmental Partnership, NorthStar Chapter - Sierra Club, MN Center for Environmental Advocacy and Fresh Energy [St. Paul]*