



March 16, 2023

Chair Samantha Vang
House Agriculture Finance and Policy Committee
545 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Vang and Members of the Committee,

The Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) appreciates the opportunity to share written testimony on behalf of our nearly 30,000 members to highlight MFBF's support for specific provisions included in H.F. 2679. Based on MFBF policy set by our grassroots membership across the state's 87 counties, MFBF specifically wants to identify support for the following provisions included in H.F. 2679:

- Creation and funding for the Soil Health Financial Assistance Program;
- Continued investment and support for beginning farmers;
- Funding for biofuels infrastructure;
- Further support for rural mental health resources;
- Investment into the Agriculture Emergency account and agricultural emergency preparedness and response;
- New investments for meat processing and butchery in Minnesota;
- Grants to facilitate the start-up, modernization or expansion of meat, poultry, egg and milk processing facilities in Minnesota;
- Continued investment for the Agriculture Growth, Research and Innovation program (AGRI);
- Funding for Minnesota's county fairs to preserve and promote Minnesota agriculture;
- Strong investment into the Agriculture Research, Education, Extension and Technology Transfer program (AGREETT);
- Continued financial support for the Minnesota Agricultural Education and Leadership Council;
- Support for marketing opportunities for Minnesota agriculture— both domestic and international;
- Continued investment into the Dairy Development and Profitability Enhancement programs;
- Appropriations for the wolf and elk depredation accounts; and
- Appropriations for crop damage accounts.

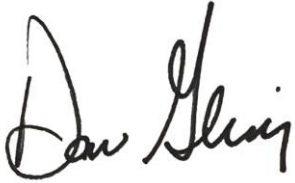
Additionally, we would like to highlight one provision we would like to see receive additional funding. H.F. 2679 as written only delegates \$5 million for the Grain Indemnity Account. Through policy developed during our grassroots process in November, our membership clearly stated a grain indemnity fund should not be funded through a fee-based appropriation. The bill also includes a provision allowing for the Commissioner of Agriculture to create up to a 0.2 percent fee on the price of grain to be paid into the fund, by the farmer once the fund falls below a \$9 million threshold. MFBF requests a general fund appropriation of at least \$9 million, with a preference that the account be funded at \$15 million.

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MFBF appreciates the investments the committee put forward for the future of agriculture in Minnesota. If there are any questions from members of the committee, please do not hesitate to reach out to Pierce Bennett, Director of Public Policy at pierce.bennett@fbmn.org or Kaytlin Bemis, Public Policy Specialist at kaytlin.bemis@fbmn.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dan Glessing". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dan Glessing
President