

THE  
**DRINK LOCAL**  
ECONOMIC RECOVERY PACKAGE



The Honorable Zack Stephenson, Chair  
Minnesota House Commerce Committee  
Room 509, State Office Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155-1232

Re: Redhead Creamery LLC testimony on HF 1192 (Olson)

Dear Chair Stephenson and Members of the Committee:

Members of my family and I own Redhead Creamery LLC. In seven years, we've built a bootstrapped on-farm creamery. Capital costs, learning curves and struggles were all high for the first few years. But we've ground our way to year seven and are feeling like a legitimate small business. As a dairy farm and cheese plant, we've been active in the craft beverages movement as sellers and with pairings of Minnesota beer, wine and cider. The changes in HF 1192 would help us plant more cider apple trees - we'll have 1,000 on the ground next year - as demand would grow and we'd better use land that isn't great for row crops. Plus, if we can help make more craft beverage businesses profitable, our customers will have more choices and they love that.

More directly, I hope to break away from the family business and start a microdistillery on our farm nearby. I've run the numbers 25 times, and the small microdistillery changes in HF 1192 would make a world of difference.

In our cheese business, people come buy cheese, but they often buy it as gifts for others. In my research, I've traveled Wisconsin and North Dakota, picking up 2 or 4 or 6 of the typical mL bottles at each place I stopped. I'm sharing these with people. I'm not going to go to a liquor store to pick them up. I'm a tourist!

Further, if I love them and want them distributed, I'd ask my local liquor store to carry them. In the cheese world, we've found that our on-farm agritourism leads to in store sales. And, our in-store sales leads to on-farm agritourism. If we want to promote vibrant farms, vibrant rural communities and opportunities for new businesses, we should support HF 1192.

Sincerely,

Lucas Sjoström  
Partner  
Redhead Creamery LLC  
Brooten | 11 Employees