

February 24, 2023

Dear Chair Vang, Vice-Chair Pursell, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to you in regards to LEAFF bill. I have been a farmer for 15 years and as a Hmong farmer and limited resources when we started out over 30,000 families Hmong Family grow vegetables and every year we would have so much vegetables that we just let it rot in the fields or donate them for no income. It was hard labor with little return.

Since the LEAFF program was started to help buy produce and off set some of those unused vegetables we were able to give to food shelves and low income families and so there is an answer to the food hunger program and legislators like you who want to help solve the idea of food and hunger will make a huge impact. As a farmer we were able to get our extra produce and fresh produce through the LEAFF program which purchased our produce and the extra 5,000 helped us put irrigation on our farm.

Every year I hear that you want to help solve hunger and low income family access healthy and nutritious foods not food sourced from a different state but local and fresh produce from farmers who work countless hours and have no markets to sell there fresh produce. We do not have a production issue here in Minnesota we have an over abundance and excess issue but because of limited english and resources these farmers do not have markets.

The Good Acre has bridge that medium finding grant dollars as the LEAFF program to help buy these fresh and nutritious vegetables and give to families in need. If this has been a success imagine if you were to not pass this bill all those families we are currently helping is not able to access this food source and you should be working to make this a permanent program if there is a need and there is money allocated to support farmers and those in need. By helping the farmer you are also helping this global crisis by increasing the carbon implant. The reason you are at the legislature is to make sure that we continue to route our monies into our local farmers and economy so we can support those disadvantaged. By ridding this program you are basically saying that its ok to not route food to help farmers buy vegetables and let this excess vegetables in the fields with no market.

Please support the LEAFF bill.

Mhonpaj Lee
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