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March 15, 2022

Chair Ruth Richardson
House Education Policy Committee
403 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Richardson and Committee Members,

On behalf of Minnesota Farmers Union (MFU), I write to share my support for providing students with breakfast and lunch at school at no cost (HF1729). This bill will help eliminate hunger in the classroom and reduce the stigma and paperwork associated with qualifying for income-based feeding programs.

MFU is a grassroots organization that has represented Minnesota's family farmers, ranchers, and rural communities since 1918. Our family farmer members care about providing nutritious food to children because they believe in investing in the success and well-being of the students in their communities. That is why our members passed resolutions during our policy development process to support the continuation of school food programs regardless of the ability of the family to pay.

Particularly in a state with such an abundant agricultural economy, it is unacceptable that 1 in 6 Minnesota children is food insecure.

Thank you for your consideration of this investment and for Rep. Jordan for her leadership on this important issue. If you have any questions, please contact our Government Relations Director, Stu Lourey, at stu@mfu.org or (320) 232-2047 (C). Thank you for your work on behalf of farmers and all Minnesotans.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gary Wertish". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "G" and "W".

Gary Wertish
President, Minnesota Farmers Union