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Representative Samatha Vang, Chair
Minnesota House Agriculture Finance and Policy Committee

Re: [24-07701\(Pursell\)](#) Soil health bill.

The Minnesota Crop Production Retailers supports renewing the Agricultural Fertilizer Research and Education Council (AFREC), extending the sunset date for ten (10) years for the council, and maintaining the associated funding as recommended by the AFREC Council.

The research supported by AFREC has led to advancements in fertilizer efficiency, a better understanding of how to deploy cover crops, and strategies to improve soil health and protect water quality. We are concerned that sunsetting this valuable program and ending the peer-reviewed research would limit progress on developing and sharing innovations in farming practices. A few highlights of AFREC's impact include the following:

Nutrient Management

Helping farmers improve their nutrient use efficiency is key to producing more food with less environmental impact.

Soil Health & Water Quality

Minimizing nitrate loss to groundwater and surface water is crucial to maintaining clean water for all Minnesotans, from private well water to lakes, streams, and rivers that provide fishing, boating, and swimming opportunities.

Education & Outreach

Of additional value is that AFREC funds conferences and communication efforts to help educate farmers and crop consultants about key findings.

We encourage the members of the committee to maintain AFREC and extend the sunset for 10 years.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration.

Lee Helgen, Executive Director
Minnesota Crop Production Retailers