



February 23, 2023

To House Ag Committee

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

I'd like to request your support for HF 1744/SF 1727 which includes funding for The Good Acre's LEAFF program. I am the Executive Director of Mill City Farmers Market and Mill City Farmers Market Charitable Fund, located in Minneapolis. Our organization was a founding donor and leadership committee member of The Good Acre's LEAFF program. An enthusiastic group of organizations came together during the early days of the pandemic to support farmers who had planted crops but were quickly losing outlets at which to sell them with all of the shutdowns. I witnessed first hand the effects this program had on the livelihood of our market and partner farmers. It was essential in providing them some income during those difficult early days.

The program directly supports our community members facing food insecurity with fresh produce, essential for a nutritious diet. Investing in LEAFF would mean that more fresh produce grown by emerging farmers in Minnesota would make it to our food bank/shelf. By connecting more emerging farmers to the hunger relief supply chain we are able to get more fresh, healthy, and culturally relevant crops to our community members in need.

Supporting HF 1744 (SF 1727) will help make sure more food from our community supports the well-being of our community. It lays a framework that will help strengthen the local food system and ensure that farmers of color have the market access they need to run a sustainable farm business. It also will help to make sure our most vulnerable citizens have access to the very best of Minnesota's bountiful harvest.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Martha Archer

Executive Director

Mill City Farmers Market Charitable Fund

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