



To Whom It May Concern,

On behalf of The Village Agricultural Cooperative, I would like to offer my support for bill H.F 1744, the Good Acre grant funding provided for the Local Emergency Assistance Farmer Fund program, and money appropriated

The Village Agricultural Cooperative and Learning Community Village aims to create opportunities for our communities to grow culturally relevant food. The mission of the Village Agricultural Cooperative and Learning Community is three fold: 1. Connect People with Land 2. Provide Education and resource connections 3. Grow the farmers of tomorrow, especially the BIPOC farmers.

Our organization has struggled to secure funding to provide emergency assistance to our growers during the Pandemic. There wasn't any funding available for us to assist our growers as they have requested more land access to grow their own cultural food. Some of the farmer's family had lost their jobs or put on furlough during the COVID-19. We were very lucky to work with the Covenant Church in Rochester to provide more land access for our farmers. We have seen how food expenses have gone up within the past 10 years. Our organization realized that food expenses have gone up tremendously not only during the pandemic but also as Rochester city is growing. This has impacted our farmers as their cultural vegetables were even more expensive as it is being imported from other states or countries. To help cut down the food cost our organization has created opportunities for our farmers to grow to sell at the market. This is why last year, our organization rented 3 acres of land so our farmers could grow food to sell at the Village Farmer Market which was funded by the Renewing The Countryside (RTC) as a partnership.

Another component that our organization is very passionate about is current events such as climate change, social justice, regenerative agriculture, and locally grown foods which decrease supply chains. We are also passionate about ecopsychology and how our connection to the world around us impacts our mental, physical, and spiritual health. We hope to hire people with

the skills and interests to support people in our community to grow their own food and be connected with fresh air, exercise, and healthy foods. A lot of our growers have reduced their mental stress and growers have less health issues.

I hope the House Ag Committee Administrator will support the Good Acre grant funding provided for the Local Emergency Assistance Farmer Fund program, and money appropriated as this will support many of our farmers that called Minnesota home.

Sincerely,

*Kim Sin*

Kim Sin Co-Founder and Chair of the Village 2/27/2023