



*Working to protect the Mississippi River  
and its watershed in the Twin Cities area.*

101 East Fifth Street  
Suite 2000  
Saint Paul, MN 55101

651-222-2193  
[www.fmr.org](http://www.fmr.org)  
[info@fmr.org](mailto:info@fmr.org)

February 24, 2023

Minnesota House of Representatives  
Committee on Agriculture Finance & Policy  
75 Dr. Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive  
St. Paul, MN 55101

Re: Support for The Good Acre's LEAFF program

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

Friends of the Mississippi River (FMR) is a non-profit organization established in 1993 to engage people to protect, restore and enhance the Mississippi River and its watershed in Minnesota. These goals are furthered by the success of sustainable agriculture initiatives—and by the inclusion of diverse communities in this work—which is why we support HF 1744, a bill to provide funding for The Good Acre's Local Emergency Assistance Farmer Fund (LEAFF).

By investing in the LEAFF program, more fresh produce grown by emerging farmers in Minnesota will make it to local food shelves. Communities of color are more than twice as likely to be facing hunger in our state. Providing opportunities for farmers of color to channel culturally specific crops into the hunger relief pipeline is what one Minnesota is all about.

Please support HF 1744 to help make sure more food from here is for here. The program 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,

Peter LaFontaine  
Agriculture Policy Manager