

March 15, 2023

Dear Chair Liebling and Members of the Committee:

The Land Stewardship Project strongly supports House File 96 (Long). We believe that every person deserves high-quality, affordable healthcare, regardless of their income, employment, geography, or immigration status. This bill is a step in the right direction toward addressing the failures of our current, corporate-driven healthcare system plagued by ever-rising deductibles and other out-of-pocket costs.

LSP has approximately 4,500 households in our membership. That membership includes approximately 1500 farmers, as well as many aspiring farmers, self-employed people, owners of small businesses, and the workers at those businesses in communities all across the state. Exorbitant private health insurance costs on the individual market are a financial burden for these members. Over and over again, we hear that the lack of affordable, usable healthcare coverage holds them back from pursuing these vocations. Many are forced to keep their income low in order to stay on MinnesotaCare, or take another job just to get health insurance benefits to support themselves and their families. Rural residents, in particular, are poorly served by the individual insurance market with its limited plan options and restrictive provider networks.

MinnesotaCare has provided high-quality healthcare coverage for low-income working Minnesotans since 1992. Removing the income limit would allow middle-income Minnesotans to also have access to this reliable insurance as they fully invest their time and energy in helping our communities thrive.

On behalf of LSP Members across the state,

**Al Kruse**

LSP Healthcare Steering Committee Member

Marshall, MN

**Dr. Aleta Borrud**

LSP Healthcare Steering Committee Member

Rochester, MN

**Amy Barr-Saxena**

LSP Healthcare Steering Committee Member

Minnetonka, MN

**Jack Ramsland**

LSP Healthcare Steering Committee Member

Winona, MN

**Jennifer Jacquot-Devries**

LSP Healthcare Steering Committee Member

Brainerd, MN

**Dr. Mark Martin**

LSP Healthcare Steering Committee Member

Minneiska, MN

**Paula Williams**

LSP Healthcare Steering Committee Member

Barnum, MN

**Darwin Dyce**

LSP Healthcare Steering Committee Member

Ghent, MN