



March 2, 2022

Chair Mike Sundin

House Agriculture Finance and Policy Committee

100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Sundin and members of the committee:

On behalf of Land Stewardship Project's (LSP) 4,500 household members, I write in strong support of H.F. 3640 to provide training grants to meat and poultry processors. During the COVID-19 pandemic, we have seen farmers euthanize animals and others booking processing dates even before animals are born. What has become clear is that we need to support small and mid-sized meat processing facilities so that they can serve the needs of farmers and address a lack of adequate processing capacity across the state.

However, processors face hurdles when beginning new operations and transitioning existing facilities to new owners. Meat and poultry processors under federal or state inspection need to have Sanitation Standard Operating Procedures (SSOP) and a Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) plan or plans in place and accessing courses to develop these plans can be costly. In addition, lack of holistic business transition planning leads to processors closing their doors when they reach retirement age or passing on their business to new owners who are not well prepared or informed about how to continue operating small processing facilities.

This bill, that was developed with livestock producers and processors, looks to address both of these issues. The bill provides grants to meat and poultry processors reimbursing the cost of attending courses that support developing sanitation standard operating procedures, hazard analysis and critical control points plans, or business plans.

We appreciate your consideration of this bill and hope to see the committee's support.

Sincerely,

Sarah Goldman

LSP Policy Organizer

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The Land Stewardship Project (LSP) is a private, nonprofit organization founded in 1982 to foster an ethic of stewardship for farmland, to promote sustainable agriculture, and to develop healthy communities. LSP is dedicated to creating transformational change in our food and farming system. LSP's work has a broad and deep impact, from new farmer training and local organizing, to federal policy and community based food systems development. At the core of all our work are the values of stewardship, justice, democracy, health and community.