



March 18, 2022

Dear Nancy Conley,

I write to you today to eagerly support Rep. Lippert's "Farm to School & Early Care" bill HF 4120 to expand on farm to school funds.

As an employee at Renewing the Countryside, I want to share the importance of this bill. This increase in funding will allow us to develop stronger farm to school and early care initiatives, build supply chains and increase food safety in Minnesota School Districts. As the manager of a Farmers Market that is a food hub conducting the Farmers Market Aggregation project, leadership team member and early proponent of Farm to School I have seen firsthand the difference this makes in my community.

As a farmer myself, I can speak to the impact it makes on farmers directly. This encourages relationships with their local schools, which is a win-win in every community. When farmers work with the local schools, we can create a learning environment around where foods comes from and teach children that their food choices impact their health and wellbeing. The children get really excited to try new things and were eager to then bring their parents to the market to get more (and encourage their parents to try them too!!).

Minnesota's Farm to Cafeteria efforts have flourished in recent years. Schools are beginning to understand the legalities of buying local. They look forward to working with their local farmers, not only buying the produce, but also in creating a learning environment for the students. This bill will help create more relationships that will strengthen this.

I am grateful this bill is addressing a big need in Minnesota for local farmers and schools statewide, thank you for your attention to the importance of this Farm to School initiative.

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