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March 22, 2021

House Agriculture Finance and Policy Committee
417 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chairman Sundin and Members of the Committee:

The Red River Valley Sugarbeet Growers Association (RRVSGA) represents the approximately 2,600 sugarbeet growers who collectively own American Crystal Sugar Company (ACSC). ACSC is the largest sugarbeet company in the United States and produces sugarbeets on approximately 400,000 acres in the Red River Valley in northwest Minnesota and northeast North Dakota. Sugar is extracted in our factories from the sugarbeets raised and then sold as refined sugar. The United States raises approximately 1.1 million acres of sugarbeets domestically each year. On behalf of our members, the RRVSGA submits the following testimony in opposition to HF-670.

When necessary, our members use chlorpyrifos under the trade name Lorsban to control sugarbeet root maggots. Chlorpyrifos is the most effective postemergence insecticide we have available to use to control sugarbeet root maggots. For years, Lorsban has been registered for use by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA). Lorsban is safe and effective when used properly according to the label. Because most, if not all, of our members are licensed pesticide applicators, they have been trained in all aspects of proper pesticide use and are well aware that the “label is the law.” Trained applicators must renew those licenses every three years.

The decision to register a particular chemical for use is made after years of rigorous testing. Allowing elected politicians to second guess those decisions based on the direction of the current political winds is irresponsible and could cause great uncertainty for our members.

In addition, adoption of HF-670 would result in an inequitable situation within our membership. Those who farm on the Minnesota side of the Red River would be denied the ability to use chlorpyrifos to protect their crops while those who farm in the North Dakota side would be free to continue to use those products. This will create an unnecessary agronomic challenge within our Company.

In conclusion, we believe that decisions regarding the registration and use of crop protection products should be made by experts at the EPA and the MDA rather than by politicians. For the above reasons, we oppose HF-670.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

/s/

Christian Kiel
Minnesota Legislative Liaison