February 25, 2019

Minnesota State Legislature
75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155

Subject: Farm to School Bill

Dear Minnesota Representatives and Senators,

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, we urge you to support and vote "yes" on the Farm to School & Early Care Bills, H.F. 811 (Lippert) & S.F. 1346 (Goggin).

We believe in Farm to School because of its unique benefits. It’s good for kids. It’s good for farmers. It’s good for local communities.

Farm to School is good for our kids because it gives them access to and knowledge of healthy local foods. The link between the food kids eat and their educational and health outcomes is becoming increasingly clear. Access to fresh, healthy food, starting as young as possible, fuels brain development and shapes food preference over a lifetime.

Farm to School is good for farmers. Farmers growing foods for their local communities is a rapidly growing important area of Minnesota agriculture that needs public support and investment to expand markets.

Farm to School gives farmers a large, stable, predictable market that they can plan for in advance. It also allows them to grow value added crops that boost the bottom line and keep more families living on and caring for the land.

Farm to School is good for local economies. A study out of Oregon showed that for every dollar spent on Farm to School programs, $2.16 is generated in additional economic activity for the local economy. The Farm to School bill would not only support farmers directly, it would also give small businesses and entrepreneurs in Greater Minnesota a boost in revitalizing their communities.

This Farm to School & Early Care bill is a worthy investment that works for the health of our children, the health of our family farms and the health of our local communities. Minnesotans can easily agree that this makes sense for our state to support a statewide a farm to school program through our public support and public investment.

Please support and vote "yes" on the Farm to School & Early Care bills.

Sincerely,

Aitkin County Health & Human Services
Alice Smith Elementary
American Heart Association
Anishinaabe Agriculture Institute
Appetite For Change Inc.
Appetite for Change/Northside Fresh Coalition
Bemidji, ISD #31
Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota
Cannon River Chapter - Sustainable Farming Association
Civic League Day Nursery
Communication Workers of America MN State Council
Community Action Partnership of Ramsey & Washington Counties - Head Start
CURE (Clean Up the River Environment)
Dover Eyota Public Schools
Education Minnesota
Feeling Good MN - Powered by CentraCare Health
Hearts & Minds Preschool
Highland Park Montessori School
Hmong American Farmers Association
Honor the Earth
Hopkins Public Schools
Hunger Solutions Minnesota
Independent School District 0051 - Foley Public Schools
Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy
Jewish Family and Children's Service of Minneapolis
Lakes Country Service Cooperative
Lakeville Friends of the Environment
Land Stewardship Project
League of Women Voters Minnesota
Life Time Foundation
Little Falls Community Schools
Main Street Alliance
Mankato Area Environmentalists
Minneapolis Public Schools
Minnesota Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
Minnesota Cancer Alliance
Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy
Minnesota Farmers Union
Minnesota Farmers' Market Association
Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture
Minnesota Public Health Association
Minnesota School Garden Coalition
Minnesota School Nutrition Association
Neighborhood House
Pesticide Action Network North America
Playhouse Child Care Center
Providers Choice
Renewing the Countryside
Saint Paul Federation of Educators
Save Our Sky Blue Waters
School district 196
School Nutrition Directors of Minnesota Group
SEMMCHRA
Shared Ground Farmers' Cooperative
Sierra Club North Star Chapter
SNAP-Ed Wadena County
Sprout Food Hub
St. Cloud Reach Up Head Start Program
TakeAction Minnesota
The Farm on St. Mathias
The Food Group Minnesota Inc.
The Good Acre
Tri Valley Opportunity Council, Inc.
Wabasha Farmers Market
Waconia Public School District
Westbrook Walnut Grove School
Wilderness in the City
Youth Farm