

LEAD & CARE

Association of Family Child Care Professionals



Partnering with Providers, Supporting Family Child Care Businesses

Leadandcaremn.org

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April 2, 2025

RE: HF1795 (Nelson) Farm to institutions funding provided, and money appropriated.

To: Agriculture Finance and Policy Committee

Committee Chair and members:

I am Cyndi Cunningham, Licensed Family Childcare provider in St. Paul for 27+ years. I serve children from 6 weeks of age through 10 years. We have a focus on nature, gardening, fresh foods and local sourcing. Parents comment that children in my care are open to foods that at home they would not have offered, had access to or a positive response from their children.

I also serve as the public policy chairperson of the state association for licensed family childcare, Lead & Care (leadandcaremn.org).

I am writing to support HF1795, which aims to support children and programs by funding local sourced foods to early childhood programs.

Children become open to new foods, fresh foods and local foods when care providers have the financial support to provide said foods. Even in the metro area, I benefit from farmers and producers of products through farmers markets and other resources. My 'city kids' do not always have this connection, and this financial support will ensure we can make these connections.

Not all programs have the financial ability to source local food. Food costs have risen in price and without such support many providers will not be in a position to offer the amazing fresh farm connection which can be purchased.

Please support this bill, including family childcare, to benefit children and the ag community.

Sincerely,

Cyndi Cunningham
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St. Paul, MN 55117
Lead & Care Public Policy Chairperson