



January 19, 2023

Dear Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Minnesota Soybean Growers Association, which represents our state's nearly 28,000 soybean farmers, it's my great pleasure to endorse the confirmation of Minnesota Department of Agriculture Commissioner Thom Petersen.

Many of us in the farming community first knew Commissioner Petersen during his years with Minnesota Farmers Union. We've long felt that the MDA commissioner should also be a farmer, and Mr. Petersen certainly fits the bill. We championed his appointment back in 2019, and the Commissioner has proven time and time again over the past four years that he is a true champion for farmers across the state.

We appreciate Commissioner Petersen's dedication to agriculture throughout Minnesota. It's not lost on farmers throughout the state the number of miles Commissioner Petersen logged on behalf of MDA, driving to all corners of Minnesota. We believe it's important for the leaders of state agencies to be seen and heard throughout the state, and Commissioner Petersen certainly walks the walk in this regard. He's become a fixture at commodity functions and events, and always has time to visit with farmers. He has met with countless Minnesota farmers, knows many of us by name, and has listened to the concerns of his constituents with compassion and empathy. He's simply a worthy advocate for Minnesota farmers. Commissioner gives our industry, which contributes 25 percent to Minnesota GDP, the respect and dignity it deserves.

We have worked with the commissioner on many issues over the course of Gov. Walz's first term, from tax relief to dicamba guidelines. Many of our MSGA farmer leaders and staff have had the pleasure of traveling with the Commissioner on international trade missions. Commissioner Petersen always looks at the big picture and does what he feels is right for Minnesota agriculture. Though we don't agree on every policy issue, Commissioner Petersen is always respectful, courteous and affable, even when our priorities diverge. He doesn't play politics; Commissioner Petersen simply does what he feels is best for his fellow farmers. He's also been a strong supporter of MSGA. He spoke last summer at our 60th anniversary event and even recently contributed a column to our magazine, Soybean Business.

We certainly look forward to a fruitful working relationship with Commissioner Petersen in the years to come, and urge the committee to confirm his appointment as soon as possible. As someone who's known the Commissioner for many years, I'm proud to offer a full-throated endorsement of his confirmation.

Sincerely,

Bob Worth
President, Minnesota Soybean Growers Association