



Aitkin	CarltonCook	Itasca	Lake of the Woods
Becker	Cass	Crow Wing	Koochiching Pine
Beltrami	Clearwater	Hubbard	Lake St. Louis

February 9, 2023

Honorable Senator Aric Putnam  
Committee Chair – Agriculture , Broadband, and Rural Development Committee  
Minnesota Senate  
3215 Minnesota Senate Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Senator Putnam,

The Minnesota Association of County Land Commissioners (MACLC) supports fully the passage of Senate File 1312 which appropriates \$1,000,000 in Fiscal Year 2024 and \$1,000,000 in Fiscal Year 2025 to the Commissioner of Agriculture for grants to support County Agricultural Inspectors.

MACLC is a consortium of 15 northern Minnesota county land departments responsible for managing 2.8 million acres of county tax forfeit and county fee property. These lands are used by Minnesotans for many purposes, including supporting the timber and outdoor recreation industry, provide clean air and clean water, sequester atmospheric carbon and provide native plants for our pollinators. These lands are susceptible to invasive plants, often transported by human recreational or road uses or by native fauna and because of the remote nature, detection and control of noxious weeds is difficult. In response to this, many of our MACLC members are the County Agricultural Inspector, Designated Employee (MN Statute 18.81) or house the County Agricultural Inspector. Our funding for these positions comes from county tax levies and funding is pro-rated accordingly to the seasonality of the work, and it rarely covers all the work that needs to be done. Senate File 1312 will help County Agricultural Inspectors perform the work we are lawfully charged to do by supplying the required funds to detect invasives, purchase equipment, contract treatment specialists (both mechanical and holistic) and replant if necessary with native plants.

MACLC urges the passage of this Bill, to be included in the final Omnibus Agriculture Bill. MACLC also recommends this Bill be amended to include County Designated Employees as set forth in MS 18.81, who also provide the same statutorily required services as a County Agricultural Inspector.

Thank you for your consideration, and please contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

*Nate Eide*

Nate Eide  
Chair, MACLC

c/c Sen Robert Kupec, Vice Chair  
Sen Torrey Westrom, Ranking Minority Member

Sen Bruce Anderson  
Sen Gary Dahms  
Sen Gene Dornink  
Sen Heather Gustafson  
Sen Mary Kunesh  
Sen Judy Seeberger