



**LAND
STEWARDSHIP
PROJECT**

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Dear Senate House and Human Services Committee:

The Land Stewardship Project strongly supports Senate File 49. We believe that every person deserves high-quality, affordable healthcare, regardless of their income, employment, geography, or immigration status. This bill is a step in the right direction toward addressing the failures of our current, corporate-driven healthcare system plagued by ever-rising deductibles and other out-of-pocket costs.

LSP has approximately 4,500 households in our membership. That membership includes approximately 1500 farmers, as well as many aspiring farmers, self-employed people, owners of small businesses, and the workers at those businesses, in communities all across the state. Exorbitant private health insurance costs on the individual market are a financial burden for these members. Over and over again, we hear that the lack of affordable, usable healthcare coverage holds people back from pursuing these work that cares for the land and keeps our rural communities strong. Many are forced to keep their income low in order to stay on MinnesotaCare, or take another job just to get health insurance benefits to support themselves and their families. Rural residents, in particular, are poorly served by the individual insurance market with its limited plan options and restrictive provider networks.

MinnesotaCare has provided high-quality healthcare coverage for low-income working Minnesotans since 1992. Removing the income limit would allow middle-income Minnesotans to also have access to this reliable insurance as they fully invest their time and energy in helping our communities thrive.

On behalf of LSP Members across the state,

Al Kruse

LSP Healthcare Steering Committee Member
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