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January 18, 2023

Chair Ann Rest
95 University Avenue W.
Minnesota Senate Bldg., Room 2217
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Rest members of the committee:

On behalf of Minnesota Farmers Union (MFU), I write to share our enthusiastic support for confirming Paul Marquart as Commissioner of Revenue. Based on our experience working closely with him during his time as House Tax Chair, we are confident that his service at the Department will help make our tax system clear, sustainable, and fair. Particularly now with a historic surplus, we are grateful for his leadership and know it will help your committee sustainably invest in a better future for all Minnesotans.

MFU is a grassroots general farm organization that has represented farmers, ranchers, and rural communities since 1918. Since 2000 when he was elected to represent his home in Northwest Minnesota, Commissioner Marquart has been a steady advocate for greater Minnesota. A standout among his recent accomplishments was securing an increase to the Ag to School Tax Credit, which highlighted his passion for rural communities and equity in our education system.

Through his work on this proposal and so many others, Commissioner Marquart was a model for accessibility, humility, and service. He has always been quick to meet with our members, curious about their ideas and experiences, and eager to turn those ideas into action. As the leader of a large and at times unwieldy agency, we believe these qualities will help our members resolve issues and feel genuinely connected to their government.

Even more than that, while Commissioner Marquart is always willing to listen, he is also unafraid to tell you when he disagrees or needs more information. This transparent and straightforward way of making decisions is particularly important in the context of Revenue where choices are complex and nearly always include tradeoffs that must be weighed carefully.

Finally, the opportunity of the state's projected surplus is like nothing we have seen. It is without reservation that we place our support behind Commissioner Marquart as the leader who will partner with your committee to sustainably invest in making lives better for farm families and other working Minnesotans.

We appreciate your consideration of our strong support for Commissioner Marquart's confirmation. If you have any questions, please contact our Government Relations Director, Stu Lourey, at stu@mfu.org or (320) 232-2047. Thank you for considering the needs and perspectives of Minnesota's farm families.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gary Wertish". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "G" and "W".

Gary Wertish
President, Minnesota Farmers Union