

**IN SUPPORT
BILL #1575**

Dear Chair Putnam and Members of the Committee,

My name is Tracy Zierke, and I farm with my two brothers in Elmore, Minnesota. I am writing to express my strong support for Senate File 1575, authored by Senator Kupec. Due to the potential blizzard/weather tomorrow, Weds. March 5th and the 3-hour drive, I will not make it to the hearing, please read this in my absence.

As a farmer of over 42 years in Faribault county of Southern Minnesota, I take seriously my responsibility to protect the land and water that sustains my operation. Several years ago, I made the decision to incorporate a microbial nitrogen-producing product into my synthetic nitrogen mix for corn production. This diversification of Nitrogen sources on my farm has allowed me and my brothers to maintain high yields while drastically reducing the risk of nitrogen/Nitrate leaching into our waterways. Last cropping season, with over 45" of heavy spring rains, was a testimony to reasons we need better, reliable sources of Nitrogen. Knowing that my farm is contributing to better water quality in Minnesota is very important to me.

Despite the clear advantages of biological nitrogen products, many farmers are hesitant to make the switch due to financial risks and uncertainty. By providing incentives for adoption, this legislation would give more farmers the confidence to integrate these sustainable solutions into their operations. The result would be a meaningful reduction in nitrate runoff, benefiting both agriculture, our production of corn in Minnesota, and the environment.

I appreciate Senator Kupec's leadership in advancing this initiative and urge the committee to support SF 1575. I urge you to support this bill which represents a practical step toward protecting Minnesota's water resources while ensuring farmers have the tools they need to succeed.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Tracy Zierke
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