

March 24, 2025

Chair Aric Putnam  
Senate Agriculture, Veterans, Broadband, and Rural Development Committee  
Minnesota Senate Building, Room 3215  
95 University Avenue West  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Chair Putnam and members of the committee,

I write in support of Senate File 2809, which appropriates funds for farm safety grants and outreach to farmers, ranchers, and others in the agricultural community. This legislation would continue crucial funding efforts that support the health and wellbeing of members of Minnesota's agricultural industry.

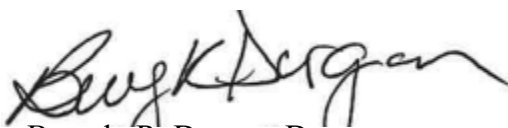
University of Minnesota Extension's mission is to support all Minnesotans, and our Farm Safety and Health Team supports efforts to keep Minnesota farmers safe and healthy. Extension supports farm safety through several programs and partnerships, including our work on the Minnesota Farm Safety Working Group.

Unfortunately, Minnesota consistently ranks among the top three states in the nation for agricultural confined space incidents. Additional funding that provides support to farmers for safety equipment is an important resource to implement our collective farm safety efforts.

There is an ongoing need for both mental health and farm safety support in the state. The rural mental health outreach supported by this bill will assist with the recently reported 650 rural mental health calls fielded by Minnesota rural mental health specialists. These critical resources on rural mental health have saved lives.

Thank you for your attention to farm safety and mental health through Senate File 2809. These resources will help extend the farm safety and health work of Extension and our partners.

Sincerely,



Beverly R. Durgan, Dean  
University of Minnesota Extension