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March 17, 2021

Chair Gene Pelowski, Jr.  
House Committee on Industrial Education and Economic Development Finance and Policy  
491 State Office Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Pelowski and members of the committee:

On behalf of Minnesota Farmers Union (MFU) and as a member of the Rural Broadband Coalition, I write to express strong support for Representative Ecklund's bill to invest \$120 million in funding for the Border-to-Border Broadband Development Grant Program (H.F. 14). Strong and consistent funding will help us make sorely needed progress toward connecting every Minnesotan to quality, high-speed internet.

MFU is a grassroots organization that has represented Minnesota's family farmers, ranchers and rural communities since 1918. Family farmers rely on the internet to connect with customers, monitor market trends, educate themselves on the latest farming methods, and make use of modern farming technology—it's increasingly essential to running a farm business. Not only that, but farmers, like all Minnesotans, use the internet to access healthcare, attend school remotely, and engage with their community.

That's why our members identified broadband development as a special order of business at our convention this past November. High speed internet isn't a luxury—it's a need.

We appreciate Representative Ecklund's hard work to make sure all Minnesotans are connected and ask for your support of H.F. 14. If you have any questions, please contact our Government Relations Director, Stu Lourey, at [stu@mfu.org](mailto:stu@mfu.org) or (320) 232-2047 (C). 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