

# Minnesota House of Representatives



# Minnesota Senate

May 11, 2017

Dear Governor Dayton,

We're writing to you to clear up the misinformation being propagated by your administration regarding the Agriculture Finance Omnibus bill that was passed in the House and Senate with bipartisan support that now awaits your signature.

For weeks, we as the chairs of the Agriculture Committees have worked to assemble a conference committee report that we believe can earn your signature. The Agriculture Finance Conference Committee report is the result of a compromise agreement between bills that passed the House 134-0, and the Senate 42-25. Agriculture has been and remains an area that enjoys bipartisan support.

That's why we were so disheartened to read the false, partisan attacks that were distributed to media outlets regarding provisions within our bill.

First, your administration claimed the Agriculture bill would "eliminate a fee charged on chemical companies, which funds the safe collection and disposal of waste pesticide throughout the state." This is false. There is no language pertaining to the fee your administration references anywhere in the Agriculture Finance Conference Committee Report.

Secondly, your administration claims the Agriculture bill would "give a free license on pesticide overuse." This assertion is offensive to farmers and the agriculture community, and shows your disconnect from the agriculture community by assuming the worst in farmers. If you took the time to listen to farmers rather than casting aspersions in partisan memos, you would know that farmers go to great lengths to care for their land and water, and only apply pesticides when they are absolutely needed to protect crop yield. Pesticides are expensive, and overuse of pesticides would be bad for our crops, bad for our land, and bad for our bottom lines. This provision is a response to the overreach by your administration under your 16-07 Executive Order. Our language provides that compliance with the federal label is law, and the Minnesota Department of Agriculture would retain its authority to enforce label compliance.

Governor, it seems we are close to agreement on a final Agriculture Finance bill but for these two provisions. I urge you to look at facts—and stop listening to your partisan aides and special interests who are either misinformed or deliberately feeding you incorrect information. These are eminently reasonable provisions that enjoy broad, bipartisan support in the legislature and by farmers across the state.

We urge you to listen to us. We stand available to meet by phone or in person at your earliest convenience.

Respectfully,

Handwritten signature of Representative Rod Hamilton in blue ink.

Representative Rod Hamilton  
Chair, House Agriculture  
Finance Committee

Handwritten signature of Senator Torrey Westrom in blue ink.

Senator Torrey Westrom  
Chair, Senate Agriculture,  
Rural Development and  
Housing Finance Committee

Handwritten signature of Representative Paul Anderson in blue ink.

Representative Paul Anderson  
Chair, House Agriculture  
Policy Committee

Handwritten signature of Senator Bill Weber in blue ink.

Senator Bill Weber  
Chair, Senate Agriculture,  
Rural Development and  
Housing Policy Committee

