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## **Minnesota Farmers Union pleased with Legislative session**

St. Paul, MN (May 24, 2016) – The Minnesota Legislature concluded its regular business Monday May 23<sup>rd</sup>, Minnesota Farmers Union (MFU) saw many positive pieces included for agriculture. “When the session started MFU’s top legislative priorities were addressing property taxes, rural broadband, clarifying the new buffer law and extending the Farmer-Lender Mediation Act as well as other priorities” said MFU President Doug Peterson. MFU was pleased to see positive action on these issues including:

- Passage of SF 2503/HF 3000 that clarifies that the new buffer legislation that passed last year is limited to public waters and public ditches, and also clarifies enforcement and buffer starting point.

- Passage of SF 3018 that extends the Farmer-Lender Mediation Act for two years. Without the extension this program would have ended this summer.

- Inclusion of \$35 million dollars for Rural Broadband in the omnibus budget supplemental bill HF 2749.

- Inclusion of \$90 million dollars in the omnibus tax bill SF 848 in tax relief for farmers from school capital improvement levies starting for taxes payable in 2017 from the portion of property taxes subject to an improvement levy.

In addition, MFU was pleased to see funding included for Industrial Hemp, the Forever Green perennial crop initiative, the Good Food Access Fund, MN Ag Water Quality Certification Program, and tractor roll-over safety program. In addition MFU was pleased to see language included that addresses concerns farmers had with recapture liens for Medical Assistance (MA) and for not placing a \$20,000 asset test on farmers enrolled in Minnesota Care. MFU is urging Governor Mark Dayton to take action and sign the bills containing these provisions.

Finally Peterson added that “MFU is disappointed that at this time no action was taken on transportation funding this summer for rural roads and bridges, our organization will continue to advocate for adequate transportation funding.

*Minnesota Farmers Union—Standing for Agriculture, Fighting for Farmers ([www.mfu.org](http://www.mfu.org)).*

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