

Dear, Senator Harp

3/21/11

My name is Bruce Harrelson and I am a sophomore in the Ellis Clark Regional Agriscience and Technology program in Woodbury. I live in Woodbury and I attend this regional agriscience school choice Program because it is of great interest of me and it is providing great education about managing life in the coming years. I have applied for this course in 8<sup>th</sup> grade and I was very fortunate to be one of the selected people to participate in the program. Once I got into started with the education in the program I began to love it. It is one of the smartest choices I have ever made; this program teaches life skills like how to associate with people and the values of obtaining a job. Each student in the program has to participate in a SAE or Supervised Agricultural Experience. The SAE is a job outside of school that you work at to use the skills learned in the Ag program. I work on a local beef cattle farm in Woodbury as my SAE and I thoroughly enjoy it because I use all the skills we learn in class and it helps connect what we learn. In the program we have a chance to compete in a CDE or Career Development Event which we have different teams on a broad agricultural topics. The CDE also helps students apply what they learn and other future life skills. Last year I competed in the mechanic CDE along with three other team members.

I am writing this letter to encourage you to **please urge the Appropriations Committee to pledge 9 million dollars of the school choice funding increases proposed in the Governor's budget to the state's 19 regional (vo-ag) agriscience programs.**

Our agriscience programs have been drastically underfunded for over 20 years as compared to the magnet schools, charter schools, vocational technical schools and the other school choice funding programs. (Please see attached flyer with details)

This will allow hundreds of more students like me to enroll in these successful programs so they will have the same positive experience I am having now.

Thank you for your time and attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

*Bruce Harrelson*