



April 30, 2021

To the Members of the Agriculture and Broadband Conference Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Omnibus Agriculture and Broadband Finance Bill (SF958), specifically the language regarding Farmer-Lender Mediation included in the House language, Article 2, Sections 34 to 38. The Minnesota Bankers Association is a trade group representing 95% of the banks in Minnesota from the largest to the very smallest.

Minnesota banks are always working with their customers: before, during and sometimes even after mediation has concluded. We, do however, have concerns with adding 30 days to the 90-day mediation process without any input from all stakeholders who participate in the program.

In 2016, a Farmer-Lender Mediation task force was convened with all stakeholders to review the program and at no time during those discussions was the length of the mediation process raised as an issue. We believe that making a significant change to the Minnesota Farmer Lender Mediation Act timelines without comprehensive stakeholder engagement, and data showing the need for 120 days of mediation, is premature.

We also have concerns with extending the sunset without more discussion. The last time the timeline was extended for more than four years was after a thorough discussion of the program. The sunset is not set to expire until June 30, 2022. allowing ample time for further review.

We look forward to the continued discussions with legislators and other stakeholders on this program. Please contact us if there is additional information we can provide.

Sincerely,

Teresa Rice
General Counsel

