

2025 POLICY BOOK



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SOUTH DAKOTA FARMERS UNION 2025 PROGRAM AND POLICY STATEMENT

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**LONG TERM PURPOSES AND POLICY PROGRAM OF
SOUTH DAKOTA FARMERS UNION**

2025 PROGRAM AND POLICY STATEMENT OF THE
SOUTH DAKOTA FARMERS UNION AS ADOPTED BY THE DELEGATES AT THE
SOUTH DAKOTA FARMERS UNION CONVENTION
DECEMBER 10-11, 2024

1 **I. MISSION**
2
3 Uniting family farmers, ranchers, and rural
4 communities to strengthen South Dakota.

5
6 **II. AGRICULTURAL PROGRAMS**

7
8 **A. Commodities**

9
10 **1. Commodity Research and Promotion**
11 **Programs**

12 a. Checkoff Programs

13 i. We will support research and
14 promotion programs financed by deductions
15 from the proceeds of sales by producers of
16 agriculture commodities if the following
17 criteria are met:

18 A. Checkoff Board Appointment
19 Producers affiliated with a foreign-owned
20 entity should be prohibited from serving on a
21 Checkoff board. United States Department
22 of Agriculture should ensure that there is no
23 conflict of interest among Checkoff board
24 appointments.

25 B. That disbursement of funds
26 collected is controlled by boards of all
27 producers elected by the producers assessed.

28 C. The operations of the program are
29 controlled by those producers' boards,
30 excluding individuals with ties to foreign
31 entities.

32 D. The programs are voluntary at the
33 point of sale.

34 E. At least 75 percent of all collected
35 checkoff dollars each year are spent.

36 b. National Beef Checkoff

37 i. We believe in beef checkoff reform.

38 ii. We urge the **National Farmers**
39 **Union (NFU)** to act as a contracting agent of
40 the National Beef Checkoff whenever
41 possible.

42 iii. Imports should be excluded from the
43 Checkoff collection and U.S. Beef Checkoff
44 dollars should be used to promote U.S. beef
45 only.

46 iv. We urge complete separation
47 between the Beef Checkoff and the **National**
48 **Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA).**

49 c. **South Dakota Beef Industry Council**
50 **(SDBIC)**

51 i. We support at least three
52 representatives from the **South Dakota**
53 **Farmers Union (SDFU)** on SDBIC.

54 ii. We urge the representation of the dairy
55 cattle industry.

56
57 **2. Marketing**

58 a. We urge that appropriate steps be taken to
59 establish federal protections for all
60 agricultural commodities.

61 b. We support federal appropriations for
62 grants-in-aid to state-operated programs of
63 seed and fertilizer inspection, plant and
64 livestock, pest disease eradication and
65 control, forest fire prevention, market news
66 and warehouse licensing, and other farmer
67 and consumer protective and marketing
68 services including those carried out by the
69 **Food and Drug Administration (FDA)** as
70 well as by the **U.S. Department of**
71 **Agriculture (USDA).**

72 c. We support the **Commodity Futures**
73 **Trading Commission (CFTC)** in enforcing
74 existing laws, rules, and regulations and the
75 CFTC denies any request for an increase in
76 the number of positions that may be held by
77 any individual trader.

78
79 **3. Grain**

80 a. Bonding

81 i. We urge continued monitoring of
82 bonding costs and a review of possible
83 alternatives.

84 ii. We support a study of bonding
85 requirements or other producer protection
86 methods undertaken by the South Dakota
87 **Public Utilities Commission (PUC)** because
88 of growing concerns that some elevators are
89 not bonded sufficiently to protect their
90 customers.

91 b. Inspection

1 i. We urge Congress to review the
2 adequacy of the grain inspection system with
3 an emphasis on prohibiting conflicts of
4 interest between inspectors and grain traders.

5 ii. We urge Congress to review the
6 adequacy of the grain inspection system with
7 emphasis on providing penalties for
8 noncompliance including revocation of
9 license, suspension of operations, fines,
10 and/or imprisonment. The export of grain
11 handling license of any firm found guilty of
12 adulteration of grain moving in international
13 trade should be revoked for 10 years.

14 iii. We urge Congress to continue to
15 investigate grain companies as to the total
16 pricing system and any quality discounts
17 such as vomitoxin levels and scab.

18 c. Sale

19 i. We urge that an **equivalent bushel**
20 **concept (EBC)** be adopted, which can be
21 done by having a standard base moisture
22 level for each grain and the producer would
23 be paid for that level. This can be a deterrent
24 to the illegal practice of adding water to dry
25 grain, bringing it up to standard moisture
26 content.

27 ii. We ask Congress to enact legislation
28 making it illegal for major grain traders to sell
29 more grain than they owned during a delivery
30 month.

31 d. Protections

32 i. We support a contract grower's bill of
33 rights.

34 ii. We support the establishment and
35 enforcement of international grain standards
36 designed to protect the interests of
37 agricultural producers and consumers
38 throughout the world.

39 iii. Producers should have full flexibility
40 to make their own planting decisions.

41 iv. We support the validity of a farmer's
42 warehouse receipt as proof of his ownership
43 of stored grain in an elevator. We also
44 support legislation prohibiting the seizure of
45 said grain by elevator creditors upon
46 foreclosure of elevators.

47 v. We support grain pool indemnity
48 fund, as modeled after North Dakota.

49 vi. The funds would cover grain sales
50 and voluntary credit sales.

51 vii. The **Farmer-Owned Grain Reserve**
52 **(FOR)** should be restored and strengthened
53 to serve as an "ever-normal granary" for both
54 producers and consumers. The reserve
55 should be expanded to include all non-
56 perishable farm commodities and
57 strengthened to provide for at least one year's
58 consumption and a strategic feed grain
59 reserve dedicated to renewable energy
60 production.

61 viii. We support removing grain
62 regulations from the PUC, and to be
63 regulated by the Secretary of Agriculture.

64 **4. Specialty Crops**

65 a. We support growing specialty crops
66 including but not limited to fruits,

67 vegetables, dried fruits, nursery crops,
68 floriculture, and horticulture including turf
69 grass, sod, pulse, and herbal crops.

70 b. We support policy allowing South Dakota
71 Farmers to grow and process industrial
72 hemp under state law following federal
73 standards.
74

75 **5. Livestock**

76 a. Addressing large animal vet shortages

77 i. We support the expansion of large
78 animal vet degrees at universities and help
79 retain our graduating vets.

80 ii. We support vet techs being able to
81 perform veterinary practices under licensed
82 veterinary supervision

83 iii. We support the state's tuition
84 repayment program for large animal
85 veterinarians in rural areas.

86 b. Animal Welfare

87 i. We support continued cooperation
88 with other agricultural organizations to
89 combat misinformation and support good
90 animal husbandry practices.
91

1 ii. We support all efforts to refute anti-
2 meat campaigns. Farmers Union members
3 are urged to write letters and contact the
4 media with accurate information on the use
5 and benefits of all meats.

6 iii. We recommend South Dakota
7 Farmers Union members monitor the
8 activities of animal rights activists.

9 iv. We oppose the ideologies and
10 agendas of extremist organizations.

11 v. We favor the humane treatment of
12 animals; however, we urge caution in passing
13 laws regarding animal rights so that sound
14 management practices are not adversely
15 affected.

16 vi. We support agricultural industry-
17 established standards for the management,
18 care, and treatment of animals in agriculture,
19 commerce, and research.

20 c. Antibiotics

21 We believe **ionophores** should not be
22 defined as an antibiotic and all subsequent
23 research statistics should be defined as
24 separate entities.

25 d. Dairy

26 i. We support regional milk marketing
27 compacts provided they:

28 A. Address the price of all classes of
29 milk, not just Class I.

30 B. Set the compact price at the cost
31 of production.

32 ii. We support a dairy pricing system that
33 protects a profit margin.

34 iii. We understand health measures but
35 resist further consolidation and burdensome
36 restrictions on raw milk sales from on-farm
37 production to the public as long as adequate
38 labeling is provided.

39 iv. We support the family dairy industry
40 and statewide efforts for the continued
41 development of dairy production and
42 manufacturing.

43 e. Development

44 i. We promote the development of
45 livestock production in S.D. as a vital

46 component in maintaining a healthy
47 agricultural sector.

48 ii. We support the implementation of
49 anaerobic digesters at facilities that provide
50 green energy and will provide more efficient
51 fertilizer.

52 iii. We support the establishment of a
53 clean-up fund for large-scale livestock
54 facilities. Revenues should be collected
55 annually from operators of confinements
56 with 1,000 animal units or more and
57 deposited into a fund to provide for the clean-
58 up of wastes attributable to such facilities,
59 including newly closed or abandoned
60 facilities.

61 f. Marketing

62 We support the following efforts and
63 programs aimed at increasing the farmer's
64 and rancher's share of the consumer's meat
65 dollar:

66 i. Development of farmer and rancher-
67 owned and local or regional meat packing
68 and retail cooperatives

69 ii. Continuous monitoring of livestock
70 and meat imports to properly assess their
71 impact on domestic markets.

72 iii. Interstate distribution of state-
73 inspected meats when state inspection
74 guidelines meet or exceed Federal guidelines.

75

76 g. Transportation

77 i. We support the transportation of all
78 livestock, including horses, for slaughter
79 domestically and internationally.

80 ii. We support a permanent rule change
81 to the Electronic Logging Device (ELD) rule
82 that allows flexibility for truckers hauling
83 livestock. These rules should take into
84 consideration the time-sensitive manner of
85 hauling livestock and the safety
86 considerations of both the public and
87 livestock.

88

89 **B. New and Beginning Farmers and** 90 **Ranchers**

91

1 **1. Lending Programs**

2 a. We believe that the federal government’s
3 status as a guarantor of loans by commercial
4 lenders must be balanced with direct lending
5 programs targeted at assisting beginning
6 farmers. Direct loans should be viewed as
7 “yardstick” credit to keep interest on private
8 loans and government-insured loans at the
9 lowest possible levels.

10 b. Efforts should be made to increase the
11 number of loans at lower interest rates with
12 emphasis on beginning farmers.

13 c. In times of drought or natural or price
14 disaster, low-interest loans should be made
15 available to farmers and ranchers with a
16 proven loss on their operation. Interest and
17 principal payments on existing loans should
18 be deferred. We further recommend that
19 during the period that a moratorium shall
20 apply, principal repayment time be extended
21 equally to the crop years lost by disaster, and
22 interest repayments should be deferred
23 without prejudice during this same period.

24 d. Operators should be allowed to refinance
25 at a lower rate of interest. Farm operating
26 loans should bear interest of 5 percent or less.
27 Emergency and disaster loans should be
28 limited to the operating costs of the next
29 year’s production.

30 e. In addition, we propose that loan
31 payments to the Farm Service Agency (FSA)
32 be placed in a state FSA revolving fund
33 which would then be made available for
34 future loans within the state.

35
36 **2. Opportunities**

37 a. We support programs connecting aspiring
38 farmers to established farmers, who desire to
39 pass their operation on.

40 b. We support education highlighting diverse
41 opportunities in agriculture.

42
43 **C. U.S. Department of Agriculture**

44
45 **1. Animal and Plant Health Inspection**
46 **Service**

47 a. **Animal Disease Traceability (ADT)**

48 i. If a mandatory **Radio Frequency**
49 **Identification (RFID)** ear tagging program
50 including all classes of cattle is implemented
51 it should include MCOOL and federal cost-
52 sharing so producers don’t bear the entire
53 cost.

54 ii. We support local control of this data by
55 the **AIB (the S.D. Animal Industry Board)**.

56 iii. Confidentiality of collected data is
57 essential to the integrity of the program. Also,
58 an exemption from the **Freedom of**
59 **Information Act (FOIA)** and limiting
60 producer liability after an ownership change
61 would need to be included in any program.

62 iv. We would not support requiring 4-H
63 and **National FFA Organization (FFA)**
64 youth to sign up their parents with a premise
65 identification.

66 b. **Health Research**

67 i. We support the continued testing of
68 plants and animals for research and disease
69 control.

70 ii. All testing should be open and
71 transparent.

72 iii. USDA should create a
73 comprehensive plan for all test results.

74 iv. We believe cattle processing plants
75 should be allowed to test for **Bovine**
76 **Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE)** in
77 individual animals.

78 c. **Pest Control**

79 We urge the establishment of a USDA/farmer
80 cost-sharing program for insect and pest
81 control during times of emergency.

82
83 **2. Labeling**

84 a. **Mandatory Country-of-Origin Labeling**
85 **(MCOOL)**

86 i. We support MCOOL for meat products.
87 Animals must be born, raised, harvested, and
88 processed in the U.S. to receive a U.S. origin
89 label such as “Product of USA”. We support
90 USDA closing loopholes threatening the
91 label “Product of USA” in the next Farm Bill

1 or future trade agreements. We recommend
2 that USDA and Congress reinstate MCOOL.

3

4 **b. Genetically Modified Organisms** 5 **(GMOs)**

6 i. The rights of both GMO and non-GMO
7 producers should be respected as appropriate
8 regulatory agencies continue to research and
9 evaluate these concerns, including but not
10 limited to required consumer labeling for
11 goods made from or containing GMOs.

12 **c. Cell-Cultured Protein**

13 Any alternative protein, including soy-
14 based, vegetable-based, synthetic protein,
15 and cultured cells are to be prevented from
16 using the term “meat” on their product.

17 **d. Milk**

18 Any alternative product, not derived from
19 lactating mammals, cannot be labeled as
20 milk.

21 **3. Crop Insurance**

22 a. We support yield adjustments for disaster
23 losses and the encouragement of expansion
24 for specialty crops and livestock.

25 b. We continue to favor the expansion of the
26 revenue assurance program.

27 c. Crop insurance should be subsidized on a
28 declining scale, with a regional adjustment to
29 premium cost

30 d. Conservation compliance should be
31 mandatory for government-subsidized crop
32 insurance.

33 e. Lending institutions should not be
34 allowed to sell crop insurance.

35

36 **4. Risk Management Agency (RMA)**

37 We support the **Inventory Management Soil**
38 **Enhancement Tool (IMSET)** as a
39 mechanism for farmers to voluntarily use
40 annually to enhance individual farmers’
41 pricing inventory while enhancing their
42 land’s marginal soil.

43

44 **5. Farm Service Agency (FSA)**

45 a. We support the farmer-elected committee
46 system. This proven system should not be

47 compromised through the addition of non-
48 farm or non-ranch appointees.

49 b. Farmer-elected committees ought to have
50 more power over day-to-day decision-
51 making involved in the administration of the
52 farm program.

53 c. We urge uniform interpretation of rules
54 and regulations between county and state
55 offices.

56 d. We oppose efforts to dismantle the FSA
57 delivery system through office closures and
58 elimination of county office employee jobs.
59 Efforts to reduce spending ought to be fairly
60 balanced among all agencies of the USDA
61 and federal government.

62 e. We support the continuation of the
63 limited resource loan program and urge that
64 35 percent of FSA loans be set aside for this
65 program.

66 f. We urge loans for construction and/or
67 improvement of farm/ranch homes to be
68 available.

69 g. We continue to support the major
70 provisions of the **1987 Farm Credit Act** and
71 support FSA observing the intent of that
72 legislation. In cases of an appeal, the State
73 Mediation Board should be used to ensure
74 impartiality.

75

76 **6. Grain Inspection, Packers and** 77 **Stockyards Administration (GIPSA)**

78 a. We urge the USDA to continually
79 monitor the operation of the mandatory
80 livestock price reporting system.

81 b. We urge that the Packers and Stockyards
82 Act be enforced with equal attention paid to
83 the problems of monopolistic control,
84 manipulation of prices, deception, and fraud.

85 c. GIPSA must be maintained and
86 adequately funded to accomplish its mission.
87 It should be prepared to coordinate research
88 and investigative work with the **Federal**
89 **Trade Commission (FTC).**

90 d. We urge GIPSA to review and revise its
91 livestock buyer bonding requirements to

1 ensure adequate protection for the sellers of
2 livestock.

3 e. We support the break-up of multinational
4 companies and incentivize local and regional
5 processor development, and prevent harmful
6 vertical integration.

7 **7. Marketing and Research**

9 a. We urge the **Agricultural Marketing**
10 **Service (AMS)** to utilize the best and most
11 accurate information for releasing crop and
12 livestock production reports.

13 b. It is very important that the USDA
14 provide accurate, up-to-date information to
15 the public about farm prices, income and
16 parity levels.

17 c. The USDA Secretary should present the
18 facts concerning the costs and benefits of
19 public expenditures and the small share of the
20 consumer food dollar received by farmers
21 and ranchers.

22 d. We urge continued research for USDA at
23 universities to develop better pest control
24 techniques and educational programs to assist
25 farmers and foresters in the best and safest
26 use of pesticides, other agricultural
27 chemicals, and other means to ensure
28 wholesome food and a clean environment.

31 **8. Payment Limitations**

32 a. So-called multiple entity rules allowing
33 farms to be artificially divided to avoid
34 payment limitations should be abolished.

35 b. We are opposed to the use of commodity
36 certificates or any other means of exceeding
37 payment limitations.

39 **9. Agricultural Data**

40 We support the property rights of all
41 producers about their agricultural data. This
42 includes but is not limited to yield maps,
43 variable rate fertilizer, variable rate seeding,
44 dual hybrid planters, and all livestock data.

45

46 **D. South Dakota Department of** 47 **Agriculture (SDDA)***

49 **1. Agricultural Services**

50 a. We recommend that the SDDA provide
51 for poultry inspection as a part of the state
52 meat inspection program.

53 b. We encourage the expansion of the S.D.
54 Pesticide Disposal Program as a way of
55 preventing groundwater contamination.

56 c. We urge the SDDA to continue the
57 voluntary credit counseling service for
58 economically hard-pressed family farmers
59 and ranchers.

60 d. We support legislation to provide
61 adequate funding for uniform inspection of
62 moisture and protein measuring devices by
63 the SDDA.

64 e. We urge the legislature to increase
65 funding for insect control and we urge the
66 SDDA to take advantage of available federal
67 funds.

68 f. The SDDA should be adequately funded
69 to enable it to:

70 i. Research, identify, and develop
71 markets for S.D. agricultural products.

72 ii. Encourage the continual tailoring of
73 S.D. agricultural production to both general
74 and specific market demands.

75 iii. Promote the processing of S.D.
76 products in S.D.

77 iv. Conduct ongoing research on
78 marketing, distribution, and production and
79 develop recommendations for new policies
80 and institutional mechanisms.

82 **2. Animal Industry Board (AIB)**

83 a. Strong controls are needed to prevent and
84 eradicate livestock and poultry diseases.

85 b. Domesticated wild animals, birds, and
86 dogs should be treated as livestock.

87 c. We must communicate with the AIB and
88 the state veterinarian to ensure affirmative
89 action that will be beneficial to the livestock
90 industry.

1 d. Horse farms and companion pet breeders
2 should be added to the jurisdiction of the
3 AIB.

4

5 **3. Brand Board**

6 a. Every member of the brand board must be
7 the owner of a registered brand and elected
8 from districts from which the board members
9 and voters reside.

10 b. We recommend that a detailed, audited
11 report be submitted to the Legislature on an
12 annual basis.

13 c. Anyone buying cattle should be given a
14 reasonable length of time to rebrand
15 purchased cattle.

16

17 **4. Marketing and Research**

18 a. We support SDDA's expanding
19 marketing and branding efforts of South
20 Dakota agricultural products.

21 b. We support expanding research into
22 adapting crops in S.D. and recognize
23 alternative crops may be viable with further
24 development.

25

26 **5. Mediation**

27 a. We support the continuation of the Farm
28 Credit Mediation Program. It has been
29 demonstrated that this program reduces the
30 number of farm bankruptcy filings and helps
31 to alleviate tensions between lenders and
32 borrowers.

33 b. We further express our support for the
34 Rural Renewal Coalition's efforts to expand
35 the mediation program to cover additional
36 areas of conflict involving farmers, ranchers,
37 government agencies, and other entities.
38 When one party asks for mediation, all
39 parties must participate.

40 c. Fees ought to be regularly reviewed and
41 reduced if their impact would deny access to
42 the program or jeopardize future federal
43 funding.

44

45 **6. Office of the Secretary**

46 We support the concept of an elected
47 Secretary of Agriculture.

48

49 **7. State Fair**

50 a. We support the S.D. State Fair in Huron.

51 b. We support legislation that would allow
52 the State Fair to keep all sales tax revenues
53 collected on the fairgrounds.

54 c. We support continued research to
55 enhance the State Fair.

56 d. We ask that the Legislature reinstate the
57 voting power of the State Fair Commission.

58 e. We support the state investing in capital
59 improvements at the State Fair.

60 f. We support State Fair funding as a line
61 item in the state budget.

62

63 **III. COOPERATIVES**

64

65 **A. Elections**

66

67 We recommend that all cooperatives use the
68 secret ballot on controversial issues and
69 elections and prohibit employees from
70 campaigning in any cooperative election.

71

72 **B. Credit Unions**

73

74 1. We support the expansion of credit
75 unions.

76 2. We encourage Farmers Union groups to
77 be aggressive in forming and furthering
78 credit unions and promoting legislation on
79 their behalf.

80 3. We oppose efforts to tax credit union
81 earnings before they are allocated to
82 members.

83 4. We oppose proposals to merge the Credit
84 Union Insurance Fund with the **Federal
85 Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC).**

86

87 **C. Farm Credit System (FCS)**

88

89 1. The FCS provides a substantial portion of
90 the credit used by American farmers and
91 ranchers.

1 2. Member control by the democratic
2 process of these cooperative financial
3 institutions is essential to their continued
4 success and survival.

5 3. We support local control over these key
6 rural lending institutions.

7 4. We urge that all borrowers be charged the
8 same rate of interest for similar loans.

9 5. All borrowers should be required to
10 purchase stock in the cooperative.

11 6. FCS institutions should be required to
12 participate in farm loan mediation programs.

13 7. We do not support the **Power of Attorney**
14 **(POA)** granted to lenders on operating notes.

15

16 **D. Marketing and Promotion**

17

18 1. We support designating October as
19 Co-op Month.

20 2. We urge the appropriation of funds to
21 staff a cooperative division in the SDDA
22 capable of promoting cooperatives as
23 required by law;

24 a. To promote cooperatives.

25 b. To provide expertise and advice in the
26 establishment of new credit unions and
27 cooperatives.

28 c. To provide expertise and resources in
29 establishing cooperative goals and to
30 provide information on local
31 demographics for planning.

32 d. To act as an impartial advisor to
33 financially troubled cooperatives.

34 3. We urge that the farm cooperative system
35 pursue the development and marketing of
36 grain-based alcohol fuels through its network
37 of local and regional cooperatives to enable
38 producers to retain some control over their
39 commodities.

40 4. We support the development of a
41 program to encourage cooperatives and
42 governmental bodies to organize local
43 collection points for material that can be
44 recycled.

45

46 **E. Taxation**

47

48 1. We oppose any governmental action that
49 attempts to dictate the time and manner of
50 returning cooperative patronage earnings or
51 refunds.

52 2. We support the **Capper-Volstead Act**
53 and urge Congress to enforce it.

54 3. Taxation of cooperatives must be
55 consistent with the Federal Internal Revenue
56 Tax Code.

57

58 **F. Value-Added**

59

60 1. We support value-added cooperatives.

61 2. We support the S.D. Value-Added
62 Agriculture Development Center and efforts
63 to build and develop additional farmer-
64 owned, value-added cooperatives in our state.
65 We welcome the fact that more than a dozen
66 other organizations and cooperatives have
67 been willing to join with Farmers Union in
68 providing support for this endeavor. We do,
69 however, believe that many traditional
70 cooperatives could do more in the way of
71 assistance, experience, and cooperation for
72 the expansion of new value-added
73 cooperatives.

74 3. We call on the **Internal Revenue Service**
75 **(IRS)** and/or Congress to amend any rules
76 preventing farmers from organizing
77 cooperatively to add value to their livestock.

78

79 **IV. EDUCATION**

80

81 **A. Ag Education**

82

83 We support legislation and utilization of
84 agriculture in the classroom in elementary
85 and secondary schools. However,
86 educational materials must be carefully
87 selected and should exclude any literature
88 promoting specific organizations or political
89 points of view.

90

91 **B. Extension Service**

92

- 1 1. We support the expansion of extension
2 services at the county level that include
3 competitive wages along with well-trained 4-
4 H county educators.
5 2. Unbiased field specialist expertise and
6 experimental farm research are vital to S.D.
7 3. We encourage continued education of
8 extension personnel and urge reduced tuition
9 for all.

10
11 **C. Federal**
12

- 13 1. We urge Congress to maintain and
14 increase funds available for student loans.
15 2. We believe young people should also be
16 given the option of participating for at least
17 two years in a national service corps as partial
18 or complete repayment of student loans.
19 3. The **ESSA (Every Student Succeeds)**
20 federal education program should be funded
21 to implement the federal requirements or
22 eliminated if not funded.
23 4. We support federal Perkins funding to
24 local school districts that offer career and
25 technical education curriculum.
26 5. We oppose any cuts of federal funds for
27 special education programs in S.D. school
28 districts.

29
30 **D. Higher Education**
31

32
33 **1. S.D. Board of Regents**

- 34 a. We recommend that the state legislature
35 and the S.D. Board of Regents as well as
36 academic faculty and administrators direct,
37 divert, and prioritize state legislative
38 appropriations in research funding to our
39 state land grant institutions toward the
40 implementation of research and development
41 of organic farming and alternative uses of our
42 crops.
43 b. We encourage all S.D. colleges and
44 universities to pursue research and grants that
45 would help and enhance the agricultural
46 industry.

47
48 **2. South Dakota State University (SDSU)**

- 49 a. We urge SDSU to maintain research
50 independent of biotechnology companies to
51 allow unbiased research.
52 b. We urge SDSU to place greater emphasis
53 on increasing farm and ranch profitability
54 through improved farm management and
55 marketing. We also urge emphasis on courses
56 about rural life studies which emphasize the
57 contributions made by family farmers and
58 ranchers.
59 c. We urge continued research for USDA at
60 universities to develop better pest control
61 techniques and educational programs to assist
62 farmers and foresters in the best and safest
63 use of pesticides, other agricultural
64 chemicals, and other means to ensure
65 wholesome food and a clean environment.

66
67 **3. University of South Dakota (USD)**

68 We encourage USD graduate doctors to stay
69 and practice medicine for ten years in rural
70 S.D. in return for the payment of their entire
71 tuition by the state.

72
73 **4. South Dakota Technical Colleges**

74 We recognize South Dakota Technical
75 College's education programs as an
76 important part of agricultural education in
77 South Dakota.

78
79 **E. Public Education**
80

- 81 1. SDFU has consistently supported our
82 educational system. We recommend the
83 continued support of these institutions of
84 learning in their endeavors to enhance the
85 cultural and economic life of the people of
86 our state and nation.
87 2. We recommend that the percentage of
88 state funding to elementary and secondary
89 public schools general funds be increased,
90 with the formula weighted to benefit small
91 schools.

1 3. The formula for granting monetary aid to
2 students should be based on the needs of the
3 individual. Rural school districts should be
4 assured of their fair share of federal and state
5 aid to education. Federal and state
6 educational requirements ought to be funded
7 with federal and state aid.
8 4. We recommend that the “scarcity factor”
9 and the “declining enrollment factor” be
10 given adequate consideration in determining
11 the level of state aid to individual school
12 districts. These are important factors for
13 rural districts where per-pupil busing costs
14 are substantially higher.
15 5. We recommend that elementary and
16 secondary schools periodically evaluate their
17 position on fundamental subjects to keep a
18 strong emphasis on basic education. There
19 should be a limit to the classroom time lost to
20 extracurricular activities by students and
21 teachers.
22 6. We support agriculture education,
23 including **Family and Consumer Science**
24 **(FACS)**, and trade and industrial training
25 programs. We recognize that FFA should be
26 considered an intra-curricular part of
27 agriculture education.
28 7. We recommend that cooperative
29 education, farm economics, and the
30 importance of the family farm to the
31 economy be included as a part of the
32 curriculum in any free enterprise course in
33 public schools.
34 8. We support adult farm management
35 courses in S.D.
36 9. We support the S.D. Literacy Council and
37 its accomplishments.
38 10. We oppose any unfunded mandates
39 regarding education.
40 11. We support additional state funding to
41 schools that offer career and technical
42 education classes such as agriculture
43 education, family and consumer sciences,
44 and trade and industrial training programs.
45 12. We urge state lawmakers to increase the
46 per-student allocation for **English as a**

47 **Second Language** program (ESL) for
48 students.

49 13. We support the study of Pre-K education
50 and funding in South Dakota.

51 **F. South Dakota Board of Education**

52
53
54 We urge the Board of Education to restore
55 funding support for extended service
56 contracts for agriculture education
57 instructors. Loss of this funding greatly
58 reduces the effectiveness of agriculture
59 education instruction at S.D. high schools
60 and reduces the educational opportunities for
61 students who may not have access to project
62 advice from agriculture education instructors
63 during the key summer months.
64

65 **V. CONSERVATION AND LAND USE**

66 **A. Conservation**

67
68
69 1. We support conservation programs
70 funded at levels that ensure continued
71 protection of our soil, water, and native sod.
72 2. We favor a paid land diversion program
73 with environmental benefits.
74 3. Base acres established before entering
75 any farm program, or being displaced by
76 natural disasters for multiple years, should be
77 preserved for times when land comes back
78 into production.
79 4. We urge the state of S.D. to restore a
80 shelter belt incentive program as a means of
81 encouraging the planting and renovation of
82 shelterbelts with an emphasis on controlling
83 invasive trees.
84

85 **B. Land Use**

86
87 1. We favor multiple uses of appropriate
88 national forests and other public and private
89 lands to include grazing of livestock and the
90 raw resources industries, commensurate with
91 family-sized farm and ranch operations.

1 2. We support a comprehensive land use
2 policy that recognizes the objectives of land
3 tenure, promotion of family farms,
4 population distribution, stabilizing farm
5 income and production, conservation of
6 natural resources, and providing land for
7 public use.

8 3. Land use regulation should be left to local
9 government except in situations that lead to
10 multi-county or interstate problems.

11 4. We oppose the acquisition of productive
12 farmland to extend wildlife habitat. The
13 arbitrary designation of farm units for
14 wildlife mitigation without negotiation with a
15 willing farm operator is disruptive and
16 destructive to the efficiency of family farm
17 management. Land to extend wildlife habitat
18 should be acquired only by short-term lease
19 or rental contract.

20 5. We urge both governmental and private
21 groups to continue expanding their efforts to
22 take action to rectify pollution problems.

23 6. We support county commissioners having
24 the final decision on the sale of property to
25 government entities.

26

27 **1. Eminent Domain**

28 a. We understand that issues of eminent
29 domain are significant for landowners. Every
30 effort should be made to adequately resolve
31 these issues. However, the welfare of the
32 entire state must receive equal consideration.

33 b. We believe eminent domain should be
34 reserved for public projects. Where eminent
35 domain may eventually be used, individuals
36 must be notified, public hearings held, and
37 PUC approves the permit.

38 c. We support severance damages including
39 payment for the diminution of remaining land
40 values and increased expenses and
41 inconvenience suffered by affected
42 landowners and operators. After initial court
43 expenses, including attorneys' and
44 appraisers' fees, additional expenses must be
45 borne by the constructing agency in
46 condemnation proceedings.

47 d. We believe eminent domain
48 consideration should be given to routes that
49 minimize adverse human impact.

50 e. We call upon federal authorities to
51 resolve eminent domain and environmental
52 impact issues to provide greater competition.

53 f. We oppose further expansion of eminent
54 domain for private industry and private use.

55 g. We oppose the use of eminent domain to
56 exchange property to only increase the tax
57 base for state income.

58

59 **2. Fifth Amendment**

60 a. We support the Fifth Amendment of the
61 United States Constitution which declares
62 that government cannot seize property
63 without just compensation.

64 b. We urge Congress to define in law "a
65 taking" as any action by the government that
66 deprives citizens of the use of their property
67 or reduces the value of that property.

68

69 **3. Planning and Zoning**

70 a. Any state legislation should recognize
71 that agricultural land must be preserved for
72 the future. Family farmers should be
73 represented in all zoning deliberations.

74 b. We encourage counties to enact
75 comprehensive land use plans and zoning
76 ordinances to control and regulate the
77 potential expansion of large-scale livestock
78 confinement facilities and cattle feed lots.

79 c. We oppose any effort to replace county
80 zoning laws with statewide zoning laws.

81 d. County planning and zoning boards should
82 be made up of a majority of rural residents.

83 We oppose county zoning boards be
84 implementing laws and regulations targeting
85 specific industries, projects, or groups.

86

87 **4. Private Property**

88 a. Anyone trespassing on private land
89 should be liable for his or her action.

90 b. No person should be allowed on private
91 property using water as access without the
92 landowner's permission.

1 c. Any state entity that controls public
2 waters that cause damage to private property
3 should be held responsible for returning the
4 property to its original form.

5
6 **5. Public Lands**

7 a. Rental fees for the lease of state-owned or
8 other public lands for grazing or other
9 agricultural purposes must be consistent with
10 rental fees on private lands in the same area
11 and of equal productivity.

12 b. When state-owned land is sold, the
13 appraised price per acre must also be
14 consistent with the value of private lands in
15 the same locality and of equal access.

16
17 **C. Natural Resources Conservation**
18 **Service (NRCS)**

19
20 **1. Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)**

21 a. We support the continuation of CRP.
22 b. CRP eligibility should be modified to
23 include lands that have been cropped during
24 at least two of the previous 10 years. CRP
25 eligibility should also be extended to include
26 farmland and pastureland that has been
27 affected by declared weather-related
28 disasters or crop diseases during at least two
29 of the previous 10 years.

30 c. CRP payments should be established at
31 fiscally responsible levels and enrollment, or
32 re-enrollment, should target lands to promote
33 restoration of soil health with payments
34 based on county average cash rents.

35 d. CRP contracts should continue to be
36 long-term.

37 e. Uniform standards should be applied for
38 enrollment or re-enrollment of land in CRP.

39
40 **2. Environmental Quality Incentive**
41 **Program (EQIP)**

42 While dealing with pollution problems, EQIP
43 assistance should be targeted to family farm
44 agricultural production units with 1,000
45 animal units or less per site.

46

47 **3. Watershed and Flood Prevention**

48 a. We urge continued funding of the Small
49 Watersheds Flood Prevention and
50 Conservation Program.

51 b. Federal funding provided through the
52 NRCS should also be targeted toward
53 reducing erosion along the Missouri River
54 watershed.

55
56 **D. Mineral Rights**

57
58 1. All mineral rights should be returned to
59 the owner of the land in 10 years or when the
60 land is resold.

61 2. All mineral rights should be retained by
62 the surface owner.

63 3. Landowners with severed mineral rights
64 need to be justly compensated and protected.

65
66 **E. Mining**

67
68 1. We are opposed to the mining of uranium
69 in S.D.

70 2. We support the adoption and enforcement
71 of a comprehensive strip-mining bill. Our
72 goal must be to ensure the best use of land
73 and to return mined land to its original use.

74
75 **F. Oil and Gas**

76
77 1. We support proper environmental
78 safeguards to protect the economic interests
79 of farmers and ranchers.

80 2. Full protection should be given during the
81 planning, exploration, development, and
82 reclamation of all processes related to oil and
83 gas exploration and development.

84 3. Land affected by oil and gas exploration
85 and development should be given 10 percent
86 obsolescence from land taxes due to the
87 devaluation of the surface.

88 4. Mediation for surface damages and
89 reclamation should be under the auspices of
90 the SDDA and should be mandatory if the
91 surface owner requests mediation 90 days

1 from the beginning of negotiations with the
2 oil and gas exploration company.

3 5. Payments for loss of income and damages
4 to the surface resulting from ongoing oil and
5 gas development should be made annually
6 until the total reclamation of the affected
7 surface is complete.

8

9 **G. Outdoor Recreation**

10

11 1. We support state statutes requiring
12 landowner permission before hunting on
13 private property.

14 2. We encourage the development of a
15 system to provide a percentage of hunting
16 and fishing license revenues to counties and
17 townships.

18 3. The authority to set license fees should be
19 returned to the state legislature.

20 4. Non-resident hunters hunting on
21 preserves should be charged the same out-of-
22 state license fees assessed against other out-
23 of-state hunters.

24 5. We favor the enactment of legislation
25 based on the Wisconsin model prohibiting
26 harassment of hunters by animal rights
27 activists.

28 6. Road hunting should not be permitted
29 without the adjoining landowner's
30 permission.

31 7. We support limiting the ability of a game
32 warden to enter private land to inspect
33 licenses while hunting without the
34 landowner's permission unless noticeable
35 violations are occurring.

36

37 **H. Pipelines**

38

39 1. We believe that proper environmental
40 safeguards must be implemented and the
41 economic interests of farmers and ranchers
42 be protected during the construction and
43 operation of oil or other pipelines.

44 2. We recommend that appropriate
45 legislation be enacted to ensure pipeline

46 safety and to protect against environmentally
47 damaging leaks.

48 3. We support all entities domestic or foreign
49 contributing to the super fund.

50

51 **I. Predator Control**

52

53 1. It is essential that the federal government
54 establish a program utilizing both federal and
55 state departments of agriculture to control
56 predatory animals. We recognize the need
57 for livestock producers to protect their
58 livestock from predators. We urge support of
59 the **Environmental Protection Agency's**
60 **(EPA)** registration review process for all
61 predator control.

62 2. We support a comprehensive review of
63 the **Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973**.

64 3. We urge the legislature to adopt a state
65 bounty on predators.

66

67 **J. South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks** 68 **(GFP)**

69

70 1. The GFP should be more accountable to
71 the state Legislature by placing its budget
72 under the authority of the appropriations
73 committee.

74 2. GFP should be required to pay taxes on
75 their lake access land at the same rate as
76 adjoining agricultural land. All state park
77 lands should be thoroughly investigated as to
78 use or non-use.

79 3. GFP should be authorized to utilize funds
80 earmarked for land acquisition to make
81 necessary repairs on dams located on state-
82 owned or leased property.

83 4. We urge the GFP to diligently control
84 noxious weeds and invasive trees on lands
85 they own or control.

86 5. We support GFP in offering a free deer
87 and antelope license to each resident
88 landowner with a production unit of 160
89 acres or more.

90 6. We support the idea of a transferable
91 landowner's deer license. The number of

1 licenses would be limited as deemed
2 necessary by the GFP.

3 7. We urge the GFP to formulate and
4 implement a plan for the management of the
5 black-tailed prairie dog on state and federal
6 land.

7 8. We urge the GFP to manage wildlife and
8 water to reduce depredation and reimburse
9 landowners for depredation.

10 9. We support the **Animal Damage**
11 **Control** program.

12 10. We support the election of the GFP
13 secretary and commissioners.

14

15 **K. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers**
16 **(USACE)**

17

18 1. We encourage USACE to address the
19 siltation problems behind mainstream
20 Missouri River dams.

21 2. We recommend that the USACE,
22 appropriate conservation districts, and the
23 states of Neb. and S.D. work together to
24 resolve erosion and sedimentation problems
25 on the Missouri and Niobrara Rivers.

26 3. We are opposed to the sale of water and
27 waterway user fees by USACE.

28 4. We support the upgrade of the
29 Mississippi locks and dams systems.

30

31 **L. Water**

32

33 **1. Law**

34 a. We urge the adoption of the following
35 order of preference in the use of water: [a]
36 domestic and municipal consumption; [b]
37 hydroelectric power; [c] industrial
38 consumption; [d] irrigation [e] wildlife [f]
39 recreation and navigation.

40 b. We agree with the objectives in the water
41 user district law by which S.D. will keep
42 priority rights on water within its boundaries.

43

44 **2. Rural Water Resource Development**
45 **Program**

46 a. The state of S.D. should have a rural
47 water resource development program
48 wherein:

49 i. The state would provide increased
50 financial assistance for the development of
51 rural water systems.

52 ii. The state would also expand research
53 and technical assistance for developing these
54 systems on an increased cooperative basis to
55 lower the cost.

56 iii. We support establishing a funding
57 program for rural water systems.

58

59 **3. Rural Water System**

60 We support the S.D. Rural Water systems and
61 full Congressional authorization and funding.

62

63 **4. Watersheds**

64 We support the federal funding for watershed
65 restoration projects.

66

67 **M. Waste**

68

69 1. We urge a safe site be found to establish
70 a hazardous waste disposal site and recognize
71 that disposal of hazardous chemical wastes
72 poses a serious threat to public health and the
73 environment in many areas of the U.S.

74 2. We encourage the development of
75 hazardous waste disposal methods, other than
76 landfills, with stricter enforcement of laws on
77 transporting and handling hazardous waste.
78 Our groundwater must be safeguarded from
79 contamination.

80 3. We support the waste pesticide collection
81 and pesticide container recycling measures
82 approved by the 1992 S.D. Legislature.

83 4. We support efforts to recycle, reuse, or
84 conserve products and resources when cost-
85 effective and environmentally safe.

86 5. We support more stringent inspection of
87 refuse and runoff from cities and towns, as
88 well as from manufacturing and processing
89 plants.

1 6. We oppose the establishment of any
2 disposal site for hazardous chemical and
3 solid wastes in S.D.

4 **N. Weed and Pest Control**

5
6
7 1. We support steps to control noxious
8 weeds, insects, and other pests on **U.S.**
9 **Forest Service (FS)** grazing land, trust land,
10 and all land within **U.S. Department of the**
11 **Interior (DOI)** and waterfowl production
12 areas as well as right-of-way.

13 2. We urge members to continue to
14 cooperate with township, county, and state
15 weed control programs.3. We are
16 opposed to legislation to combine weed and
17 pest control boards with those controlling
18 predators.

19 4. We urge support of the Environmental
20 Protection Agency's (EPA) registration
21 review process for all herbicide control
22 chemicals and it must continue to rely on
23 quality-controlled and peer-reviewed science
24 as the basis for any outcome.

25 26 **O. Wetlands**

27
28 1. We support the preservation of the
29 nation's wetlands. There should be a
30 universal definition used by all state and
31 federal agencies. Land should only be
32 designated as a wetland if all three criteria [1.
33 hydrology, 2. predominance of hydric soil,
34 and 3. a prevalence of hydrophytic
35 vegetation] are present.

36 37 **VI. ENERGY AND** 38 **TELECOMMUNICATIONS**

39 40 **A. Energy**

41 42 **1. Biodiesel and Ethanol**

43 a. We recommend continued congressional
44 vigilance to ensure that EPA regulations
45 require the use of all ethanol-blended fuels.

46 b. Education and research are the keys to a
47 successful transition from our present-day
48 petroleum dependency to a future self-
49 sufficiency based on our renewable
50 resources. We should take every opportunity
51 to dispel lies and misinformation regarding
52 the safety of ethanol.

53 c. We support an ethanol fuel program
54 utilizing low-interest federal loans to farmers
55 and groups of farmers to build ethanol
56 production plants.

57 d. We support the governor for requiring
58 Premium E30 in all state-owned, non-flex
59 fuel vehicles.

60 e. We support moving S.D. ethanol market
61 share to 30% by 2024 and 50% by 2028.

62 f. We support the continuation of the present
63 combination of state gas tax exemption and
64 producer incentives to encourage further
65 development of the ethanol industry in S.D.

66 g. We oppose any effort to impose a state tax
67 on corn to fund ethanol producer incentive
68 payments.

69 h. We urge all consumers to make greater use
70 of higher blends of ethanol and bio-diesel in
71 their motor vehicles when practical.

72 i. We encourage the promotion and use of
73 **100/RON clean octane E30** through farmer-
74 owned and branded blender pumps in S.D.
75 We will work with cooperatives and others to
76 ensure success through S.D.'s cooperative
77 fuel retailers to offer 100/RON clean octane
78 E30 providing opportunities for fuel
79 efficiency, national security, and cleaner air,
80 while also cementing a marketplace for
81 farmers and the enhancement of rural
82 economies.

83 84 **2. Development**

85 a. Agriculture is an energy producer and
86 national security improves as domestic
87 energy resources are diversified.
88 Agricultural policy and energy policy should
89 work together effectively.

90 b. Energy policy must be consistent with our
91 system of family agriculture.

1 c. Programs for the development of
2 environmentally friendly renewable energy
3 sources should be conducted, with special
4 emphasis on solar energy, wind energy, and
5 bio-based fuels, such as ethanol and
6 biodiesel.

7 d. Elements of an effective national energy
8 policy include:

9 i. Equitable distribution and efficient
10 development of energy to assure adequate
11 production of food and fiber;

12 ii. Pricing policy which will prevent
13 economic hardship;

14 iii. A massive program to develop
15 renewable sources of energy;

16 iv. Economic assistance for family
17 farmers and ranchers to make agriculture
18 more self-sufficient through increased
19 application of alternative forms of energy.

20

21 **3. Electricity**

22 a. We support the maintenance of territorial
23 protection for rural electric systems to
24 guarantee access to affordable electric power.

25 b. We oppose retail wheeling and federally
26 mandated restructuring of the electric utility
27 industry.

28 c. We believe local rural electric boards
29 should be informed on their capability to
30 promote rural economic development and
31 encouraged to participate in rural
32 development efforts.

33 d. We oppose mandatory, time-certain
34 deregulation of the electric industry at the
35 federal level. Each state should determine the
36 timing and method of any restructuring or
37 deregulation of electricity and mandatory net
38 metering.

39 e. We support the development of
40 comprehensive, science-based standards to
41 help producers and utilities work together to
42 detect and mitigate stray voltage. We also
43 support requiring that any testing for stray
44 voltage be completed by a certified
45 professional engineer or certified master
46 electrician.

47

48 **4. Federal Energy Regulatory** 49 **Commission (FERC)**

50 Regulations must be established by the FERC
51 to assure that farmers and ranchers receive
52 adequate supplies of energy necessary to
53 carry on full-scale production despite any
54 breakdown in the distribution system.
55 Increasing taxes would create a hardship for
56 farmers with no effect on reducing
57 consumption.

58

59 **5. Missouri River Dams**

60 We are opposed to any unjustified increases
61 to electrical rates. The power revenues
62 derived from the mainstream dams are on
63 schedule with the requirements of the **Pick-**
64 **Sloan Act**, which established the original
65 criteria.

66

67 **6. Public Power**

68 a. Publicly-owned resources should, to the
69 greatest extent possible, be developed on a
70 not-for-profit basis. First preference should
71 be given to publicly and cooperatively-
72 owned utilities.

73 b. We reaffirm our support for the
74 preference clause which provides a
75 preference in the sale of hydropower to
76 cooperatives and public bodies in our belief
77 that public dollars used to provide the benefit
78 of flood control, navigation, irrigation,
79 increased fish and wildlife, and recreation, as
80 well as hydropower, should be used for the
81 well-being of the general public and not the
82 stockholders of private utilities.

83 c. The **Western Area Power**
84 **Administration (WAPA)** and other
85 federally-owned **Power Marketing**
86 **Administrations (PMAs)** are essential
87 elements in the delivery of affordable electric
88 power to members of rural electric
89 cooperatives and customers of municipally-
90 owned utilities. We oppose any legislation
91 that would result in the sale of the PMAs.

1 d. We urge the DOI to reclaim leased sites
2 and facilities upon the termination of leases
3 so that the fullest possible development can
4 be made for the benefit of the power-using
5 public.

6 e. Any sale of PMAs should give current
7 preference customers the first purchase
8 option.

9 f. Future power developments on public
10 lands should be under federal government
11 supervision, with retention of the facility by
12 the government and operated in the public
13 interest.

14 g. We urge legislation to give the
15 Department of Energy authority to supervise
16 public and private power grids and entities,
17 which would prevent blackouts and failure of
18 power facilities.

19 h. We favor a policy of utility responsibility
20 by the federal government which would
21 assure non-profit power groups the necessary
22 credit and financial support to set up needed
23 generating and transmitting facilities.

25 **7. Rural Electrification Administration** 26 **(REA)**

27 a. We believe that a strong Rural Utilities
28 Loan Program is vital to the needs of the
29 nation's rural electric cooperatives.

30 b. We support the REA-insured and
31 guaranteed loan programs.

32 c. We oppose any efforts to "privatize" the
33 REA or federal power marketing agencies.

34 d. We urge Congress to approve
35 amendments to the **Rural Electrification**
36 **Act** which are designed to ensure the
37 continuation of adequate, long-term
38 financing for the nation's rural electric and
39 telecommunications systems provided that
40 lower interest rates are made available to
41 systems serving sparsely settled areas.

43 **8. Transmission**

44 a. We support the development and
45 transmission of electrical power to better

46 serve the farmers and ranchers of this
47 country.

48 b. We also urge landowner-friendly
49 development of the electrical transmission
50 facilities.

51 c. We support the cyber protection of our
52 electric grid.

54 **9. Wind and Solar Energy**

55 a. We support the responsible development
56 of minimum criteria for regulating the
57 development of wind and solar energy.

58 b. We request that the nameplate revenue
59 collected from wind and solar farms be
60 dedicated to support local public schools.

62 **B. Telecommunications**

64 **1. Regulation**

65 a. The deregulation of telecommunications
66 services should be approached with extreme
67 care to protect the interests of the consuming
68 public.

69 b. To serve the best interests of rural
70 communities of S.D., we encourage
71 investment in infrastructure to improve
72 telecommunication delivery systems in our
73 state.

74 c. We request that Congress and appropriate
75 regulatory agencies take whatever action is
76 necessary to protect the interests of
77 consumers and prosecute companies or
78 individuals found guilty of fraudulent acts.

80 **2. South Dakota Public Utilities** 81 **Commission (PUC)**

82 a. We believe that the PUC should be
83 provided with adequate personnel and
84 funding to ensure proper protection of the
85 interests of consumers.

86 b. The regulatory powers of the PUC should
87 not be tampered with unless it can be
88 demonstrated that such action is in the best
89 interests of the people of S.D.

1 c. We support continued regulatory
2 oversight of the telecommunications industry
3 by the PUC.

4

5 **3. Universal Service Fund (USF)**

6 a. We support the continuation of the USF
7 for rural telecommunications cooperatives.

8 b. To serve high-cost areas with affordable,
9 state-of-the-art telecommunication services,
10 we encourage the full funding of the USF.

11

12 **VII. ECONOMICS**

13

14 **A. Anti-Monopoly Policies**

15

16 1. We believe that monopolistic
17 concentration in the meat packing,
18 transportation, energy, and seed industries
19 has reduced competition to a point where
20 producers no longer have access to fair and
21 equitable markets. We urge the USDA and
22 **DOJ (U.S. Department of Justice)** to
23 exercise its subpoena power investigating
24 monopolistic concentration.

25 2. We support a full federal investigation of
26 the effects of concentration in the
27 transportation industry, especially rail
28 transportation.

29 3. We support anti-trust action to increase
30 competition in the private sector of energy
31 industries.

32 4. We support the implementation of a
33 temporary moratorium on large agricultural
34 mergers. The moratorium is necessary to
35 provide Congress with time to review current
36 law and strengthen it as appropriate to restore
37 market competition for producers and
38 consumers.

39 5. We urge that a national conference be
40 held to include representatives of farmers,
41 ranchers, consumers, and organized labor to
42 eliminate monopolistic practices in the food
43 industry.

44 6. We support legislation to prohibit
45 ownership or control of feedlots by
46 meatpacking firms.

47 7. We oppose ownership of livestock by
48 packing firms except for the reason of
49 immediate slaughter.

50 8. We favor a full-scale congressional
51 investigation of unjustified industry spread
52 between producer and consumer prices.

53 9. We support the passage of legislation that
54 would repeal the adverse impact of the U.S.
55 Supreme Court's decision in the **Illinois**
56 **Brick Case** and allow producers and
57 consumers to bring anti-trust actions whether
58 damages were direct or indirect.

59

60 **B. Federal Reserve Board**

61

62 The Federal Reserve Board should be
63 reconstituted to include representatives of
64 agriculture, small business, and labor.

65

66 **C. Loans**

67

68 1. Feed grain loan rates should be increased
69 to better reflect their renewable energy value.

70 2. Loan rates should be based on the cost of
71 production. The county base yields should be
72 updated.

73 3. We oppose the sale of federally financed
74 loans at a discounted rate unless the
75 individual or entity affected has the right of
76 first refusal to purchase their loan at the
77 established discount rate.

78

79 **D. Fees and Licenses**

80

81 We urge Congress to immediately investigate
82 the imposition of excessive technological
83 fees assessed against farmers.

84

85 **E. National Debt**

86

87 We support a lower national debt and reforms
88 in our inequitable tax structure.

89

90 **F. Producer Income**

91

1 We oppose any budgetary proposals that
2 would result in a direct or indirect loss of net
3 farm income to family farmers and ranchers.

4

5 **G. Rural Development**

6

7 1. We support economic development for
8 rural SD communities by adding value to
9 agriculture production by family farmers.

10 2. We support the S.D. Board of Economic
11 Development.

12 3. We believe that any program seriously
13 proposing to boost adding value to grain and
14 livestock production in S.D. must receive
15 interest rates that are at least comparable to
16 those available to businesses through the
17 **Governor's Office of Economic**
18 **Development (GOED) Revolving**
19 **Economic Development and Initiative**
20 **(REDI) Fund**. Interest rates should be
21 reflective of the **Effective Federal Funds**
22 **Rate** and be no more than 1% higher.

23 4. We support the expanded use of the REDI
24 Fund by S.D. family farmers and ranchers.
25 These changes also recognize that rural
26 people paid a disproportionate share of the
27 one-cent sales tax increase.

28 5. We urge greater use of the value-added
29 sub-fund.

30 6. We support continued S.D. funding for
31 the Northern Crops Institute.

32 7. We support the establishment of venture
33 capital groups for producer-owned
34 businesses.

35 8. We support continued statewide efforts to
36 promote increases in state processing of
37 agricultural products. These efforts should
38 include cooperation with farmers, ranchers,
39 and their organizations in promoting and
40 constructing cooperatively-owned
41 processing plants in S.D.

42 10. We support the establishment of
43 enterprise communities and empowerment
44 zones as a means of assisting development in
45 economically disadvantaged rural areas.

46 11. We continue to support local rural
47 development entities that work to expand
48 opportunities for local communities.

49 12. We urge the appropriation of public and
50 private funds for the establishment of an
51 enterprise facilitation program. Facilitation
52 programs should be able to apply and receive
53 rural development funds.

54 13. We support efforts to increase affordable
55 housing in the rural communities.

56

57 **H. Taxation**

58

59 **1. Carbon Carrier Pipeline Tax**

60 We support a tax on carbon carrier pipelines
61 for S.D. to be used for landowner property tax
62 relief and public education funds.

63

64 **2. Contractor's Excise Tax**

65 We urge the repeal of the contractor's excise
66 tax and replaced with a corporate income tax.

67

68 **3. Excess-Profits Tax**

69 An excess-profits tax should be levied on
70 those corporations whose profits are clearly
71 out of line with a reasonable rate of return on
72 invested capital.

73

74 **4. Federal Estate Tax**

75 We support a 35 percent estate tax after
76 exempting the first \$10 million.

77

78 **5. Income Tax**

79 a. We believe that personal and corporate
80 income taxes ought to be a part of a balanced
81 state tax structure. The goal of reform should
82 be a structure wherein state and local tax
83 revenues are raised approximately one-third
84 from property taxes, one-third from sales
85 taxes, and one-third from income taxes.

86 b. We support the federal income tax
87 deductibility of 100 percent of health
88 insurance premiums and healthcare costs for
89 self-employed persons.

90 c. To relieve property taxes in S.D. and to
91 provide for a more equitable sharing of the

1 costs of education, we favor state enactment
2 of a graduated personal income tax and a
3 corporate profits tax.
4 d. A state income tax should be simple, have
5 a low administrative cost, and be based on net
6 income from the federal income tax form,
7 with all revenues going to education and real
8 estate tax relief.

9

10 **6. Investment Tax Credit**

11 We urge that the investment tax credit be
12 reinstated at an incremental level beneficial
13 to family farmers and small businesses.

14

15 **7. Mineral Severance Taxes**

16 Mineral rights held by non-surface owners
17 should be made subject to a mineral tax with
18 revenues designated for purposes of property
19 tax relief to the surface owner. Severed
20 mineral rights have value and are benefited
21 from state and county roads.

22

23 **8. Motor Fuel Taxes**

24 a. We continue our long-term support for an
25 exemption from the state gas tax at the time
26 of delivery for non-highway users.

27 b. We recognize that a certain portion of gas
28 tax revenue is directly attributable to boating.
29 Expenditure of these revenues should be
30 confined to the construction or enhancement
31 of public facilities.

32 c. We oppose any legislation authorizing
33 the enactment of city gas taxes.

34 d. We oppose any new increase in fuel tax
35 for roads without an adequate amount of the
36 proceeds going to counties and townships.

37 e. We encourage any license fee increase
38 for vehicles over 5 years old to be retained in
39 the county.

40

41 **9. Property Taxes**

42 a. We support agriculture land assessment
43 based on the capability to produce, land use,
44 terrain, climate, location, soil type, and actual
45 use.

46 b. We continue to support efforts to
47 establish limitations in future property tax
48 increases.

49 c. We urge a full review of recent major
50 reductions in valuations and assessments for
51 centrally-assessed property including that
52 which is owned by utilities.

53 d. We urge the state legislature to rewrite
54 policy directing the 25 percent property tax
55 reduction to South Dakotans most in need of
56 property tax relief. Specifically, we suggest
57 the establishment of a homestead exemption.

58 e. We oppose any action to reinstitute the
59 personal property tax.

60 f. Federal and state governments and Indian
61 lands should be required to pay an amount
62 instead of taxes equal to the amount of real
63 estate taxes paid on similar private lands in
64 each county.

65 g. We support a sellers' fee assessed on
66 property sales to be distributed on a local
67 level.

68 h. We are opposed to frontage roadway
69 assessment in rural areas.

70 i. We oppose a shift in capital outlay funds
71 to general funds for education.

72

73 **10. Sales Tax**

74 a. We urge that the deductibility of state
75 sales taxes be restored to the federal tax code.

76 b. We are opposed to the imposition of a
77 national value-added, general sales tax,
78 manufacturer's tax, or any other similar tax.

79 c. We are opposed to the sales tax monthly
80 remittance procedures presently in existence
81 due to the extra burden that has been placed
82 on small businesses.

83 d. We favor legislation that will eliminate
84 the state sales tax on food, used agricultural
85 machinery, and general farm repairs.

86 e. We oppose any permissive legislation
87 authorizing the enactment of county sales
88 taxes without county voter approval.

89 f. We oppose any expansion of state sales
90 and use taxes that do not include exemptions

1 for grocery store food and clothing and are
2 not specifically earmarked for education.
3 g. We support the reinstatement of sales tax
4 exemptions for personal property sold at
5 auction, newspaper sales and subscriptions,
6 cattle semen, amateur sports officiating,
7 veterinary services, state and county fair
8 parking, and the exchange of processed raw
9 agricultural products.

10
11 **11. Tax Code**

- 12 a. We support eliminating some unjustified
13 loopholes.
14 b. Income averaging should continue as an
15 element of federal tax policy.
16 c. Every effort should be made to restore an
17 enhanced degree of progressivity to the tax
18 code by increasing the number of brackets
19 and increasing the maximum tax rate for the
20 wealthy.
21 d. Foundations and churches should be
22 taxed while engaging in commercial, profit-
23 making activities.
24 e. We believe in equitable tax treatment for
25 all businesses. We, therefore, support the
26 right of state governments to collect sales
27 taxes on Internet and catalog sales.
28 f. We urge the SD legislature to review tax
29 limitations on schools, counties, and
30 townships.

31
32 **12. Water Tax**

- 33 a. We oppose any state tax on water use
34 and/or water permits.
35 b. We urge the repeal of state statutes
36 requiring fees for water rights permits on land
37 developed for water spreading to ensure that
38 its population will always have safe, clean
39 water for human and livestock use.

40
41 **13. Trust Fund Tax**

42 The SD legislature should review trust fund
43 laws as it pertains to South Dakota tax policy.

44
45 **VIII. PUBLIC AFFAIRS**

46

47 **A. Agricultural Practices**

48
49 **1. Corporate Farming**

50 We believe that Congress should enact
51 legislation requiring investor-owned, non-
52 family farm corporations to divest their
53 holdings in agricultural properties. We call
54 on the USDA and the DOJ to conduct a
55 complete study of the extent to which
56 outright corporate ownership and contract
57 production have limited the market access of
58 independent family farmers. Once the facts
59 have been determined, we call upon Congress
60 to pursue all appropriate remedies.

61
62 **2. Land Ownership**

- 63 a. We believe that continued ownership and
64 control of U.S. agricultural land by family
65 farmers and ranchers is vital to the moral and
66 economic welfare of this nation. We support
67 constitutional restrictions on non-family farm
68 or ranch corporate ownership of agricultural
69 land and livestock. We urge like-minded
70 organizations to continue regional and
71 national cooperation to enact or strengthen
72 anti-corporate farm legislation.
73 b. We continue to support existing statutory
74 restrictions that limit the ownership of
75 agricultural land by individual, non-resident
76 aliens to 160 acres.
77 c. We urge Congress to prohibit the sale of
78 farmland in the FSA inventory to non-
79 resident foreign investors.
80 d. We support either of the following: a
81 buffer of 6 feet to prevent livestock
82 enticement or the nullification of liability for
83 the livestock producer for any trespassing
84 damages on non-buffered fence lines.

85
86 **3. Sustainable Agriculture**

87 We support farm bill provisions making
88 agriculture more sustainable and productive.

89
90 **B. Consumer Protection**

91

- 1 1. We favor strengthening the S.D. Division
2 of Consumer Protection through better
3 funding and adequate staffing.
- 4 2. We reject the sale of private browser
5 history under the Browser Act of 2017 and
6 request its repeal.
- 7 3. We support a set of rules and guidelines
8 that govern the responsible, ethical and
9 effective use of artificial intelligence
10 technologies.

11 **C. Corporations**

- 14 1. We support legislation to prohibit
15 corporations from developing or selling seed
16 that contains a terminator gene and, thus,
17 cannot reproduce.
- 18 2. We denounce all actions and
19 governments that promote the welfare of
20 multinational corporations and holders of
21 extreme wealth at the expense of the
22 American people.
- 23 3. We support legislation that would prevent
24 subsidy payments to foreign-owned entities.
- 25 4. Corporations should only be given rights
26 specifically granted by the Secretary of
27 State's filing.

28 **D. Governmental Reform**

29 **1. Campaign Finance**

- 32 a. We support comprehensive campaign
33 finance reform laws including:
 - 34 i. Presidential candidates should
35 continue to receive matching federal funds
36 for campaign expenses. Similar financial
37 assistance should also be provided to
38 candidates for the U.S. House of
39 Representatives and U.S. Senate.
 - 40 ii. Contributions from individuals
41 should be limited to \$1,000 per candidate.
42 Contributions by each **Political Action**
43 **Committee (PAC)** should be limited to
44 \$5,000 per candidate
 - 45 iii. Caps should be instituted on total
46 campaign spending.

47 iv. All types of campaign contributions
48 should be reported.

49 v. We support the eventual shift to
50 public financing and the elimination of
51 PACs.

52 b. We urge ethics legislation at the state
53 level that would result in a more in-depth
54 investigation of where campaign funds
55 originate and how they are used.

56 c. We recommend legislation to place
57 reasonable limits on campaign spending and
58 the length of campaigns. Elimination of soft
59 money contributions should be a top priority.

60 d. We support a progressive sales tax on
61 campaign spending based on what the elected
62 officeholder receives for that office.
63 Initiatives and referendums are based on
64 what SD voters contribute.

65 e. We are opposed to the ruling by the U.S.
66 Supreme Court that makes it possible for a
67 corporation to be considered as an
68 "individual" regarding campaign
69 contributions.

70 **2. Civil Liberties**

71 a. It shall be our purpose to seek to preserve
72 and broaden the civil liberties and rights of all
73 the people. The demands of the Declaration
74 of Independence and the safeguards
75 guaranteed to the people by the Constitution
76 and its Bill of Rights and subsequent
77 amendments must be made a code of conduct
78 for our nation.

79 b. We shall oppose those persons or forces
80 that seek to abridge, abrogate, or eliminate
81 any of our civil rights and liberties.

82 **3. Discrimination**

83 We shall continue to seek as individuals and
84 as an organization to remove every remaining
85 vestige of discrimination in any government
86 agency whenever and wherever it may arise.

87 **4. Elected Officials**

88 a. We support legislation requiring
89 complete disclosure of income and sources of
90

1 income by legislators and other elected
2 public officials.

3 b. We oppose any merger of constitutional
4 offices.

6 **5. Elections**

7 a. All electronic voting machines shall have
8 a paper record to verify the votes.

9 b. We urge that no unnecessary restrictions
10 be placed on voter registration or the right of
11 citizens to vote by absentee ballot.

12 c. We urge strong enforcement of the
13 **Voting Rights Act.**

14 d. We oppose any actions to increase the
15 number of signatures required to initiate or
16 refer to a law.

17 e. We urge repeal of rules requiring
18 anything more than the printing of name,
19 signature, address or box number and date of
20 signing initiative, referendum, constitutional
21 amendment, and candidate petitions.

22 f. We favor legislation to require full
23 disclosure of federal tax returns by
24 candidates for state constitutional offices and
25 the state Legislature at least two months
26 before the general election.

27 g. We support whatever constitutional or
28 other action is necessary to restore the right
29 of citizens to initiate or refer measures that
30 include state revenue.

31 h. We oppose any effort to reduce the
32 required percentage of voter approval in local
33 bond issue elections.

34 i. We support keeping all local voting rolls,
35 including names, addresses, voting records,
36 and social security numbers, from becoming
37 public records.

39 **6. Equal Access to Justice Act (EAJA)**

40 We support any efforts to bring substantive
41 reform to the EAJA.

43 **7. Line-Item Veto**

44 We oppose the line-item veto.

46 **8. S.D. State Legislature**

47 a. We are opposed to changing the
48 legislature to a unicameral or single-house
49 body.

50 b. We support legislation to elect state
51 senators for a four-year term.

52 c. We support some form of compensation
53 to legislators performing legislative-related
54 duties on weekends and when the Legislature
55 is not actually in session.

56 d. We support repeal of the so-called
57 S.D. 'gag law.' **“We advocate for open
58 records, transparent meetings, and
59 fostering transparency between the public
60 and governmental authorities.”**

62 e. We support establishing a non-partisan
63 redistricting body and single-member house
64 districts statewide.

65 f. We support legislation requiring all
66 registered lobbyists to report all fees and
67 compensation that they receive for their
68 legislative activity.

70 **9. State Agencies**

71 a. We ask that the tax advocate position in
72 state government be taken away from the
73 S.D. Department of Revenue and be placed
74 under the S.D. Department of Legislative
75 Audit.

76 b. We urge that all state-purchased vehicles
77 and equipment be manufactured in the U.S.

79 **10. Tort Law**

80 We support tort reform to include caps on
81 civil liability.

83 **E. Healthcare**

85 1. We support a comprehensive, universal,
86 national, prepaid healthcare and medical
87 facilities insurance program. This program
88 should enable every citizen to receive
89 adequate medical, dental, hospital,
90 chiropractic, and other healthcare services,
91 including treatment for alcoholism, drug
92 addiction, mental illness, and prescription

1 drugs. This program should also include
2 preventative healthcare services.
3 2. We recommend a careful study of
4 healthcare systems in other states and
5 nations.
6 3. We support the single-payer system.
7 4. We support hospice care for the
8 terminally ill.
9 5. We continue to support the “division of
10 assets” concept.
11 6. We support assisted living and minimum-
12 care homes for those people who do not
13 require the care of nursing homes.
14 7. We believe insurers should be required to
15 cover the full cost of regular check-ups and
16 preventative healthcare.
17 8. We support the inclusion of reasonable
18 chiropractic care in any state healthcare plan.
19 9. We support an expansion of a risk pool
20 for uninsurable South Dakotans.
21 10. We urge that any national or state health
22 reform plans maintain rural access and cost
23 containment as important priorities.
24 11. We support legislation that would allow
25 American pharmacists and distributors to
26 import prescription drugs approved by the
27 FDA and sell them at more affordable prices.
28 12. We urge the U.S. government and
29 healthcare providers to negotiate with drug
30 manufacturers to make prescription drug
31 prices more in line with those that are
32 available in other countries.
33 13. We urge substantially increased federal
34 appropriations for research on all major
35 diseases and the study of prevention and
36 effective treatment of mental illness.
37 14. We support 100 percent deductibility for
38 health insurance premiums to include all
39 healthcare costs.
40 15. We support Congress limiting the ability
41 of health insurance companies to dictate
42 length of stay or possible hospital procedures.
43 16. We support a patient’s right to choose
44 their medical provider.
45 17. We support the elimination of
46 discriminatory pricing of prescription drugs.

47 18. The definition of “group” should be
48 expanded to make group policies available to
49 all people.
50 19. We support the establishment of a self-
51 funding cooperative movement for health
52 insurance.

53 **F. Mental Health**

54
55 1. We support public and private programs
56 to incentivize mental health and addiction
57 professionals to move to and practice in
58 rural communities
59 2. We support full mental healthcare
60 coverage by insurance groups.
61 3. We support increased mental healthcare
62 availability in our public schools.
63 4. We support evidence-based prevention
64 treatment and education efforts to reduce
65 illegal substance use, addiction, and suicide.
66

67 **G. Humanitarian Aid**

68
69 We recognize that children constitute our
70 greatest asset and we support nutritional,
71 educational, and financial assistance
72 programs targeted to improving the current
73 welfare and future opportunities for all
74 children.
75

76 **H. Medicaid and Medicare**

77
78 1. We oppose work requirements for
79 Medicaid recipients.
80 2. We support larger reimbursements from
81 our state for Medicaid residents of long-term
82 care facilities.
83 3. We support federal legislation aimed at
84 providing equal coverage of Medicare
85 reimbursement procedures so that vital rural
86 medical facilities may survive.
87 4. We urge a review of the **Diagnostic
88 Related Groups (DRG)** policy for patient
89 stays and believe patients in need of further
90 medical care should be allowed to remain in
91 the hospital.
92

1 5. We recommend that the period for
2 changing the medications or prices paid by
3 insurance companies and the period for an
4 individual to change an insurance carrier
5 shall be the same.

6 7 **I. Nutrition** 8

9 1. We oppose reductions in domestic food
10 utilization and distribution programs such as
11 the **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance**
12 **Program (SNAP)**, school lunches, **Women,**
13 **Infants, and Children (WIC)** programs,
14 elderly nutrition programs, and summer food
15 service programs, which will assist people in
16 obtaining sufficient food to meet their
17 nutritional needs, including donated produce
18 and animal protein from local sources.

19 2. We call upon state and federal
20 administrations to expand the school milk
21 and school lunch programs to every school
22 child. Reduction of surpluses and improved
23 child nutrition would be advanced by
24 offering school children additional cartons of
25 milk.

26 3. We support wholesome foods in schools
27 with fewer restrictions to create more
28 balanced and geographically appropriate
29 diets for our students including produce and
30 inspected animal protein from local sources.

31 4. Federal agencies should be prohibited
32 from using imported commodities in school
33 lunches and other organization programs.

34 5. We oppose federally mandated nutrition
35 standards for school lunches that replace
36 long-accepted health standards with menu
37 choices that reduce or eliminate meat and
38 dairy products.

39 6. Federally-owned surplus commodities
40 should be utilized in the school lunch and
41 summer food service programs.

42 7. We feel the USDA should use all
43 authorities it has, including donations, to
44 dispense any excess commodities to those
45 people, both domestic and worldwide, who
46 are in need.

47 48 **J. Occupational Safety and Health** 49 **Administration (OSHA)** 50

51 We endorse the concept of the federal OSHA
52 because of the importance of providing safe
53 and healthful working conditions. Due
54 process of law must be guaranteed in
55 determining guilt and assessing fines.

56 57 **K. Retirement System** 58

59 1. We ask that the present retirement system
60 for elected officials [President, Vice
61 President, and Congress] be made more
62 equitable within the level of the Social
63 Security formula.

64 2. We encourage individual, personal
65 retirement plans.

66 67 **L. Seniors** 68

69 We advocate the continuation and expansion
70 of experience works service, visiting
71 neighbors, mini-bus, senior nutrition, meals-
72 on-wheels, and other programs to enable
73 senior citizens to retain their independence.

74 75 **M. Social Security** 76

77 1. We believe in a strong Social Security
78 system in the U.S. We recommend that:

79 a. **Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA)**
80 must be recalculated to include real-world
81 expenses. Simply pinning COLA to the rate
82 of inflation is an inefficient and detrimental
83 method; necessities such as food, fuel,
84 prescription medication, healthcare, and
85 insurance must be included.

86 b. Dependents of beneficiaries should
87 receive support through four years of post-
88 secondary education.

89 c. Aid to disabled persons between the ages
90 of 18 and 55 should not be contingent upon
91 the economic status of the spouse, parents, or
92 other relatives.

1 2. We urge the **Social Security**
2 **Administration (SSA)** and NFU to dispense
3 information on how farmers may qualify
4 through **Social Security Disability**
5 **Insurance (SSDI)**.

6 3. We recommend that federal matching
7 funds, equal to the annual contributions by
8 and on behalf of individuals, be appropriated
9 to the Social Security Fund. Social Security
10 taxes should be paid on unearned as well as
11 earned income with Social Security payments
12 being the only exception.

13 4. We oppose the use of Social Security
14 funds for purposes other than Social Security
15 benefits, such as private plans.

16 5. We recommend that married couples
17 filing joint income tax returns shall have their
18 Social Security payments pooled, regardless
19 of the source of income from which the
20 payment is derived.

21 6. We recommend the income cap limitation
22 reflect inflationary values and be raised in
23 conjunction with COLA.

24
25 **N. South Dakota Public Broadcasting**
26 **(SDPB)**
27

28 1. We support state and federal efforts to
29 fund SDPB programs.

30 2. We support the continuation of
31 agriculturally oriented programming.

32
33 **O. Transportation**
34

35 **1. Highways**

36 a. We urge the federal government to
37 allocate sufficient funds for highway
38 construction and maintenance in S.D.

39 b. We oppose any proposals to lessen the
40 historical congressional commitments for
41 funding to support rural America's secondary
42 and farm-to-market highway systems.

43 c. We oppose any further increase in federal
44 motor fuel taxes that is not specifically
45 targeted at improving and maintaining the
46 nation's transportation system.

47 d. We urge continued cooperation to
48 promote highway safety to reduce the present
49 death toll from accidents.

50 e. All state highway junctions should have
51 turning lanes installed for the safety of
52 motorists.

53 f. We urge the **S.D. Department of**
54 **Transportation (SDDOT)** to make a greater
55 effort to ensure the safety of rural S.D. by
56 having well-lit state highway junctions.

57 g. We support and encourage legislation that
58 helps fund rural county and township
59 highways, bridges, and culverts for the safety
60 and maintenance of the farm-to-market
61 system to sustain the economic health of rural
62 South Dakota. An adequate highway system,
63 including farm-to-market roads, is essential
64 to the economic health and well-being of S.D.

65 h. We support federal highway funding aid
66 for secondary roads and bridge repair.

67 i. All efforts should be made to reduce
68 unnecessary damage to S.D. highways and
69 secondary roads. However, we oppose any
70 effort to allow law enforcement officials to
71 obtain elevator weight tickets without a
72 search warrant and to retroactively charge
73 truckers with weight violations. Any
74 legislation to alter load limits or legal trailer
75 length should include provisions to allow
76 current operators a sufficient grace period to
77 comply with the law.

78
79 **2. Railroads**

80 a. We continue to support the S.D. State
81 Rail Authority and efforts to preserve and
82 rebuild all aspects of our rail system. Local
83 transportation districts should receive all
84 possible assistance from state and federal
85 governments.

86 b. We support the concept of cooperative or
87 other local ownership of railroad lines.

88 c. The state of S.D. should consult with
89 surrounding states so that efforts to restore or
90 preserve rail service can be coordinated
91 wherever possible.

1 d. We support changes in state law that
2 would allow businesses using the tracks to
3 reimburse the state for repairs over a
4 reasonable period.

5 e. Shippers captive to a single rail line
6 should be protected from excessive rates and
7 healthy competition among railroads should
8 be encouraged.

9 f. We urge legislation allowing adjoining
10 landowners to initiate a process of abandoned
11 railroad right-of-way to convert to adjoining
12 land.

13 g. Landowners adjoining abandoned
14 railroad lines should have first right of refusal
15 to purchase the property.

16 h. We urge legislation requiring the
17 reflectorizing of the sides of railroad cars.
18 Lights on business structures should be
19 regulated so they do not interfere with traffic.

20

21 **P. U.S. Postal Service (USPS)**

22

23 1. We are opposed to any proposal that
24 would result in the sale or transfer of the
25 USPS to private business. The USPS was
26 established as a national responsibility more
27 than 200 years ago and that is what it should
28 remain.

29 2. We oppose any closings of post offices,
30 processing centers, and reductions in service
31 to rural people.

32 3. We believe that postal service is a right
33 and not a privilege. We believe, therefore,
34 that the USPS should not be required by law
35 to be a self-supporting institution, especially
36 if that status results in oppressive increases in
37 postal rates and reduction of services.

38 4. We support allowing the USPS to fund its
39 pension similarly to private enterprise.

40

41 **Q. Veterans**

42

43 1. The nation must honor all promises of
44 rights and benefits made to veterans.

45 2. We especially advocate the continued
46 availability of medical services for all

47 honorably discharged veterans through the
48 **U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)**
49 hospitals.

50 3. We ask that the burial expense for all
51 veterans be reinstated.

52 4. Provision of services should not be
53 contingent on the economic status of the
54 veteran.

55 5. We oppose the shifting of guaranteed
56 veterans' home loans from one bank to
57 another to facilitate certain banks getting out
58 of such loans in agricultural communities.

59 6. We encourage all nursing homes to have
60 the right to admit veterans with the same
61 benefits they have at a VA hospital.

62

63 **R. Working People**

64

65 1. We support legislation that allows all
66 people to earn a living wage.

67 2. It is our belief there should be
68 communication between agriculture and
69 labor on matters of vital interest to both.

70 3. We support the rights of youth to work
71 and participate in all agricultural activities.

72 4. We believe in a strong federal
73 immigration policy but do not support the
74 hiring of illegal workers.

75 5. We believe in a guest worker program
76 that supports the hiring of reliable
77 agricultural workers. This policy should be a
78 coherent, viable, effective worker program.

79 6. We support reforms to the visa system to
80 make it responsive to the needs of our
81 economy and businesses, with a focus on
82 public safety as well as protecting the
83 interests of the workers.

84 7. We believe that serious attention should
85 be given to the proposal to require worker's
86 compensation for hired farm workers and that
87 any such law should provide exemptions for
88 short-term or seasonal farm workers.

89 8. We oppose any undue state burdens that
90 may inhibit the ability of the agricultural
91 industry to employ an adequate workforce.

92

1 **IX. INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS**

2
3 **A. Aid**

4
5 1. Foreign aid has been of great assistance
6 to emerging democracies and other
7 underprivileged nations. Provision of foreign
8 aid must never be contingent upon a
9 country’s acceptance of private American
10 investment capital. U.S. financial aid should
11 be used to buy products made in the U.S.
12 when possible.

13 2. Farmer-to-farmer programs, **Public Law**
14 **480**, and other international assistance
15 programs have had positive benefits around
16 the world. We support necessary
17 improvements in their delivery system but
18 oppose termination.

19 3. **Employee Education Program (EEP)**
20 assistance ought to be retargeted toward the
21 movement of value-added rather than raw
22 agricultural products.

23 4. We advocate the promotion of economic
24 and agricultural development in food-
25 deficient countries, and we ask for expanded
26 use of the long-term loan authority of the
27 **Food for Peace Act**.

28 5. We support the international school lunch
29 program as proposed by former Senators
30 George McGovern and Robert Dole.
31 American food and fiber programs must not
32 be used as foreign policy weapons.

33
34 **B. Embargos**

35
36 Agricultural products should be exempt from
37 all embargoes.

38
39 **C. Imports**

40
41 1. We support all agricultural products
42 imported to this country be required to meet
43 the same standards of sanitation required of
44 American agricultural products and labeled
45 as to point of origin. We are especially
46 concerned about lapses that have allowed

47 foreign beef to enter the U.S. through Canada
48 or Mexico with inadequate or no inspection.
49 We oppose new USDA food safety
50 provisions, which would transfer
51 responsibility for meat inspections to
52 individual meat packers.

53 2. We urge the USDA and all relevant
54 federal agencies to make every effort to
55 ensure that **Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD)**
56 and BSE are kept out of the U.S. These
57 efforts should include a ban on the
58 importation of all animal products from
59 nations or regions that are not certified free of
60 these diseases.

61 3. We oppose the rule allowing live animals
62 over the age of 30 months to be imported for
63 slaughter and breeding in the U.S.

64
65 **D. Military Armaments**

66
67 We support the continuation of arms control
68 negotiations between all nations.

69
70 **E. Peace Corps**

71
72 We urge the continuation and expansion of
73 the Peace Corps program.

74
75 **F. Trade Negotiations**

76
77 1. We oppose any kind of “Trade Promotion
78 Authority” legislation for free-trade
79 agreements and urge Congress to vote on
80 each package. For these trade agreements to
81 be fair, factors such as labor standards,
82 growing practices, differing currency
83 exchange rates, and food safety regulations
84 must be considered. In any free-trade
85 agreement negotiation, the U.S.
86 Representatives should create a commodity-
87 by-commodity breakdown of the effect that
88 the agreement will have on the U.S.
89 agriculture industry.

90 2. We respect all nations’ sovereignty and
91 food policies and thus urge open dialogue,

1 cooperation, and understanding in trade
2 negotiations relating to biotechnology.

3
4 **G. United Nations (UN)**

- 5
6 1. We endorse the original concept behind
7 the UN. We believe that it must continue to
8 serve as a forum for countries of the world to
9 seek peaceful relations with each other. The
10 UN or any other world court should never
11 take precedence over or be superior to the
12 Constitution of the U.S. or the Bill of Rights.
13 2. We support the World Food Program of
14 the **Food and Agriculture Organization**
15 **(FAO)**, and we ask that technical assistance
16 for various UN programs be expanded.
17 3. We support the recognition and activities
18 of World Food Day. International food
19 security would be enhanced by the
20 establishment of a UN Strategic Grain
21 Reserve. This reserve should be financed by
22 member nations according to their ability to
23 pay and located in the major grain-producing
24 nations. The reserve should be sufficient to
25 meet expected international emergencies.

26
27 **X. APPENDIX**

28
29 **A. Membership**

- 30
31 1. A large membership of family farmers and
32 ranchers is the base of a strong, respected,
33 and influential SDFU. Among the benefits of
34 membership in the Farmers Union are:
35 a. The right to full participation in activities
36 and policy-making decisions and the right to
37 election as an officer or delegate to state and
38 national conventions.
39 b. Participation in the Farmers Union youth
40 and other educational activities and
41 conferences.
42 c. A subscription to the South Dakota Union
43 Farmer, the official publication of the state
44 organization.
45 d. We encourage all Farmers Union
46 Insurance policyholders to become members

47 and for members to buy Farmers Union
48 Insurance.

49 e. Eligibility for membership in the
50 Traveler's Motor Club

51 2. All local, county, and district Farmers
52 Union organizations should have a full set of
53 active action officials. Active officers
54 provide greater membership participation
55 and education. They should establish good
56 public relations with local newspapers,
57 coordinate membership drives, and turn in
58 financial reports at the end of the fiscal year.

59 3. We encourage continued joint efforts with
60 all farm organizations.

61 4. We urge the greater use of county and
62 district legislative and cooperative directors.
63 Candidates for all officer positions,
64 delegates, and alternate delegates shall
65 introduce themselves from the rostrum of the
66 state convention before the election.

67 5. We urge that all members wear
68 identification badges representative of SDFU
69 while attending functions where the Farmers
70 Union is involved.

71 6. We urge our board of directors to schedule
72 an annual Farmers Union state picnic during
73 the State Fair.

74 7. We urge members to inform the state office
75 of their email addresses.

76 8. We urge members and interested parties to
77 utilize the SDFU and NFU websites and the
78 websites of its affiliated organizations such
79 as the SDFU Foundation and the SDFU
80 Insurance Agency.

81
82 **B. Education**

83
84 1. The education of Farmers Union members
85 is an ongoing project. We recommend that
86 this educational program include seminars
87 for our young adults and stress the
88 importance of district education directors.
89 Education directors must help to maintain the
90 quality and philosophy of the Farmers Union
91 organization. Major emphasis should also be
92 placed on a comprehensive adult education

1 program for Farmers Union families to
2 include coordination with vocational
3 agricultural instructors, cooperative leaders,
4 and agriculturally oriented institutions of
5 higher learning.

6 2. We advocate youth classes in every
7 Farmers Union local and county
8 organization. We recognize the value of
9 young Farmers Union members participating
10 in and working with the entire Farmers Union
11 organization. The participation of all must be
12 a goal of the youth program.

13 3. We recommend that the Education
14 Department continue the awards for
15 completion of activities approved by the
16 Education Council and stated in the
17 handbook.

18 4. We recommend that one or more state
19 Senior Youth Camps be held each year. We
20 urge every county and district Farmers Union
21 to participate in a youth camp to acquaint
22 more young people with Farmers Union
23 work.

24 5. We recommend that a Youth Advisory
25 Council be elected at each state Senior Youth
26 Camp.

27 6. We recommend that the SDFU Education
28 Department coordinate incentive tours for
29 Farmers Union youth.

30 7. We support agricultural education and
31 encourage Farmers Union education leaders
32 to become involved in farm safety training
33 programs.

34 8. We support the creation of collegiate
35 Farmers Union groups.

36 9. We recommend that the SDFU Education
37 Department provide seminars for young
38 adults to explore various production and
39 value-added agriculture opportunities.

40

41 **C. Cooperatives**

42

43 1. Farmer- and patron-owned cooperatives
44 play an important role as a stabilizing force
45 in our economic life and the promotion of the

46 democratic process through their emphasis
47 on the Rochdale Cooperative Principles.

48 2. Every member of the Farmers Union is
49 urged to buy every possible supply, sell all
50 products, and buy all their insurance products
51 and other services from Farmers Union-
52 affiliated businesses, organizations, and
53 cooperatives (e.g. cable TV).

54 3. Farmers Union local, county, and district
55 organizations need to establish and maintain
56 strong communications, participation,
57 patronage, and membership with local
58 cooperatives' boards of directors, managers,
59 and employees; and local and district
60 Farmers Union Insurance personnel.

61 4. We should continue to take a prominent
62 position of leadership in bringing the
63 cooperative story to the public.

64 5. Farmers Union affiliated cooperatives and
65 other farmer-owned cooperatives are
66 encouraged to pay the full five [5%] percent
67 educational funds to Farmers Union.

68 6. SDFU's contributions toward
69 strengthening the economic position of all of
70 agriculture are enhanced by the support of
71 farmer cooperatives through membership
72 checkoffs.

73 7. We urge CHS Inc. cooperatives to
74 aggressively seek ways to keep locally-
75 owned cooperatives open to serve the farmer
76 patron.

77 8. We encourage women, Native Americans,
78 and other minorities to become members of,
79 and directors of, cooperatives.

80

81 **D. Legislation**

82

83 1. Effective legislative activity is an essential
84 part of the overall Farmers Union effort to
85 preserve and strengthen our family farm and
86 ranch system. We urge all Farmers Union
87 members to become active participants in
88 legislative activity at the national, state, and
89 county levels.

90 2. We support the continuation of the
91 Farmers Union Washington, D.C., Fly-In

1 lobbying efforts conducted on behalf of
2 family farmers and ranchers. We ask that our
3 national and state organizations continue to
4 publish voting records of members of
5 Congress and our state legislature.

6
7 **E. Foundation**
8

9 1. We encourage all members to support the
10 endowment strengthening the foundation; a
11 nonprofit organization raising funds for
12 educating young minds, building new
13 leadership, and creating new opportunities
14 for economic growth in rural S.D.

15 2. We endorse the various approved
16 scholarship programs within the Farmers
17 Union for college education and vocational
18 training.

19
20 **F. Long-Range Farm Policy – The Parity**
21 **of Income Plan**
22

23 1. When the concept of parity was first
24 introduced in agricultural law in 1936, the
25 goal of national farm policy was to provide
26 farm families a net income that was on par
27 with the net income of non-farm families to
28 ensure that producers had the same
29 purchasing power as their urban neighbors.
30 The 1910-14 base was selected as the
31 appropriate economic period to achieve the
32 goal of income parity.

33 2. The failure of farm programs to provide
34 parity of income for family farmers is a
35 violation of the social contract between
36 family farmers and consumers in which
37 farmers are responsible for the production of
38 a dependable supply of food and fiber in
39 return for parity of income with the rest of our
40 society.

41 3. To return to the principle of parity of
42 income, federal farm policies must provide
43 agricultural incentive payments to family
44 farmers to make up the difference between
45 commodity prices in the marketplace and full
46 parity for all agricultural commodities.

47 These payments should be made to all family
48 farmers based on their units of production to
49 raise the return on their labor and
50 management to the national median family
51 income. Such payments must be strictly
52 limited to family farm operators through a
53 maximum payment level that would provide
54 full-time family farm operators a parity of net
55 income.

56 4. The payments would be based on a per-unit
57 rate for the commodities produced by the
58 family farm to make up the difference, if any,
59 between prices received and the parity price
60 of each commodity. The volume of
61 commodities for which each farm family
62 would be eligible to receive payments would
63 be computed by the difference between the
64 cost of production [excluding labor and
65 management returns] and parity. This fair
66 margin of return would be divided into the
67 national median family income level to
68 determine the maximum number of units of
69 production for which payments could be
70 made.

71 5. Payments would be made in the order of
72 the commodities that had the least difference
73 between prices received and parity to those
74 commodities that had the largest difference
75 until the goal of income parity is reached
76 through a maximum number of eligible units
77 of production for that farm.

78 6. The goal of such payments is to provide a
79 parity of income and encourage full-time
80 production by the farm family. Unearned
81 income [from interest, dividends, rent, etc.]
82 and off-farm income [from wages, etc.]
83 would reduce the maximum number of units
84 of production eligible for incentive payments
85 proportionately to the net income goal of the
86 incentive payment program.

87 7. The family farm incentive payment shall
88 be designed to encourage diversified
89 production units to the size of economic
90 efficiency for the combination of
91 commodities produced together with
92 appropriate soil and water stewardship.

1
2 **XI. ACRONYMS AND TERMS**
3 **GLOSSARY**
4

5 **100/RON clean octane E30** - An octane
6 rating is a standard measure of the
7 performance of an engine fuel. Fuels with a
8 higher octane rating are used in high-
9 performance gasoline engines that require
10 higher compression ratios.

11 **1987 Farm Credit Act** – The Agricultural
12 Credit Act of 1987

13 **ADC** – Animal Damage Control

14 **ADT** – Animal Disease Traceability

15 **AIB** – Animal Industry Board

16 **AMS** – Agricultural Marketing Service

17 **BSE** – Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy

18 **Capper-Volstead Act** – The Cooperative
19 Marketing Association Act of 1922

20 **Cell-Cultured Protein** – Food made by
21 extracting cells from an animal and growing
22 them in a bioreactor.

23 **CFTC** – Commodity Futures Trading
24 Commission

25 **CRP** – Conservation Reserve Program

26 **COLA** – Cost-of-Living Adjustment

27 **DOI** – United States Department of the
28 Interior

29 **DOJ** – United States Department of Justice

30 **DRG** – Diagnostic Related Groups
31 categorizes patients with similar diagnoses
32 and treatments for billing and reimbursement

33 **E30** – a motor fuel blend that contains 30
34 percent ethanol fuel

35 **E50** – a motor fuel blend that contains 50
36 percent ethanol fuel

37 **E85** – a motor fuel blend that consists of 85
38 percent ethanol fuel

39 **EBC** – Equivalent bushel concept

40 **EEP** – Employee Education Program

41 **EFFR** – Effective Federal Funds Rate

42 **EQIP** – Environmental Quality Incentive
43 Program

44 **EPA** – Environmental Protection Agency

45 **EAJA** – Equal Access to Justice Act

46 **ESA** – Endangered Species Act of 1973

47 **ESL** – English as a Second Language

48 **ESSA** - Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015

49 **FACS** – Family and Consumer Science

50 **FAO** – Food and Agriculture Organization of
51 the United Nations

52 **FCS** – Farm Credit System

53 **FDA** – Food and Drug Administration

54 **FDIC** – Federal Deposit Insurance
55 Corporation

56 **FERC** – Federal Energy Regulatory
57 Commission

58 **FFA** – National FFA Organization

59 **Fifth Amendment** – the Fifth Amendment of
60 the U.S. Constitution provides for individual
61 protections from double jeopardy and self-
62 incrimination; and a right to due process and
63 just compensation.

64 **FMD** – Foot and mouth disease

65 **FOIA** – Freedom of Information Act

66 **Food for Peace Act** – The Food for Peace
67 Act of 1956

68 **FOR** – Farmer-Owned Grain Reserve

69 **FS** – United States Forest Service

70 **FSA** – Farm Service Agency

71 **FTC** – Federal Trade Commission

72 **GFP** – South Dakota Game, Fish, and Parks

73 **GIPSA** – Grain Inspection, Packers and
74 Stockyards Administration

75 **GMO** – Genetically Modified Organism

76 **GOED** – Governor’s Office of Economic
77 Development

78 **Illinois Brick Case** – a United States
79 Supreme Court case, Illinois Brick Co. V.
80 Illinois, sets out the “Illinois Brick doctrine,”
81 which prohibited indirect purchasers of
82 goods or services from recovering antitrust
83 damages from antitrust violators

84 **IMSET** – Inventory Management Soil
85 Enhancement Tool

86 **Ionophores** – a lipid-soluble molecule that is
87 used as an antibiotic and/or growth-
88 enhancing feed additive.

89 **IRS** – Internal Revenue Service

90 **MCOOL** – Mandatory Country-of-Origin
91 Labeling

1 **NCBA** – National Cattleman’s Beef
2 Association
3 **NFU** – National Farmers Union
4 **NRCS** – Natural Resources Conservation
5 Service
6 **OSHA** – Occupational Safety and Health
7 Administration
8 **PAC** – Political Action Committee
9 **Pick-Sloan Act** – The Pick-Sloan Flood
10 Control Act of 1944
11 **PMA** – Power Marketing Administration
12 **POA** – Power of Attorney
13 **Public Law 480** – The Food for Peace Act of
14 1966
15 **PUC** – South Dakota Public Utilities
16 Commission
17 **REA** – Rural Electrification Administration
18 **REDI** – Revolving Economic Development
19 and Initiative
20 **RFID** – Radio frequency identification that
21 reads an animal’s information contained in a
22 wireless “tag”
23 **RMA** – Risk Management Agency
24 **Rural Electrification Act** – The Rural
25 Electrification Act of 1935
26 **SDBIC** – South Dakota Beef Industry
27 Council
28 **SDDA** – South Dakota Department of
29 Agriculture. *In 2021, The South Dakota
30 Department of Agriculture was merged with
31 the South Dakota Department of
32 Environment and Natural Resources to form
33 the South Dakota Department of Agriculture
34 and Natural Resources.
35 **SDDOT** – South Dakota Department of
36 Transportation
37 **SDFU** – South Dakota Farmers Union
38 **SDPB** – South Dakota Public Broadcasting
39 **SDSU** – South Dakota State University
40 **SNAP** – Supplemental Nutrition Assistance
41 Program
42 **SSA** – Social Security Administration
43 **SSDI** – Social Security Disability Insurance
44 **UN** – United Nations
45 **USACE** – United States Army Corps of
46 Engineers

47 **USD** – University of South Dakota
48 **USDA** – United States Department of
49 Agriculture
50 **USF** – Universal Service Fund
51 **USMEF** – U.S. Meat Export Federation
52 **USPS** – United States Postal Service
53 **VA** – United States Department of Veterans
54 Affairs
55 **Voting Rights Act** – The Voting Rights Act
56 of 1965
57 **WAPA** – Western Area Power
58 Administration
59 **WIC** – Women, Infants and Children
60

61 **XII. SPECIAL ORDERS OF BUSINESS**

62 63 **Special Order of Business #1 – Oppose** 64 **Anticompetitive Practices in Livestock** 65 **Markets**

66
67 South Dakota Farmers Union opposes efforts
68 permitting livestock auction market owners
69 to have a direct or indirect ownership interest
70 in protein processing facilities. While such
71 practices have been illegal for more than 100
72 years, proposed legislation [“A-Plus Act”
73 (H.R. 7438) and its companion bill in the
74 Senate (the “Expanding Local Meat
75 Processing Act” – S. 4709)] seek to reverse
76 the rule that has been in place to support a
77 competitive marketplace. Likewise, packers
78 should not be allowed to own livestock
79 markets. Enabling simultaneous ownership
80 in livestock markets and processing facilities
81 is a step toward vertical integration
82 increasing the potential for price
83 manipulation and less competition.
84

85 **Special Order of Business #2 - Eminent** 86 **Domain**

87
88 We believe eminent domain should be
89 reserved for public projects. In the case
90 where eminent domain may eventually be
91 used, we believe individuals must be
92 notified, that public hearings be held, and

1 PUC approves the permit before the start of
2 a project.

3
4 We oppose the use of eminent domain for
5 private industry and private use.

6
7 We support a bill in the 2025 Legislative
8 Session to require any company to have a
9 state PUC permit in hand based on changing
10 Chapter 49 of the SDCL before eminent
11 domain can be used.

12
13 **Special Order of Business #3 – Supporting**
14 **a Competition Title in the Next Farm Bill**

15
16 South Dakota Farmers Union calls on
17 congressional leadership to include a
18 Competition Title in the next Farm Bill.
19 The bill would have provisions that improve
20 transparency and price discovery in the
21 cattle markets, strengthen the Packers and
22 Stockyards Act, ensure the farmers’ right to
23 repair, reinstate MCOOL, reform mandatory
24 checkoff programs, and promote
25 competitive practices across all sectors of
26 the economy.

27
28 **Special Order of Business #4 – Addressing**
29 **Childcare Shortages in Rural**
30 **Communities**

31
32 South Dakota Farmers Union supports all
33 efforts to address the childcare shortages
34 affecting our rural communities in South
35 Dakota and opposes returning any money
36 allocated to the state by the Federal
37 government.

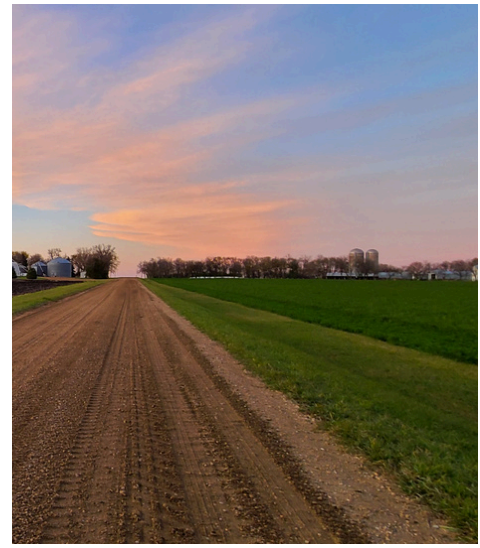
38
39 We call upon the South Dakota Legislature
40 and the South Dakota Department of Social
41 Services to address that only 7% of families
42 who qualify for subsidized daycare services
43 receive the subsidy. Further, we believe that
44 the local communities should be provided
45 financial support to address affordable
46 childcare shortages. We believe affordable

47 and accessible daycare and afterschool
48 programs are crucial to the success of our
49 rural communities and farm families.

50
51 **Special Order of Business #5– Build a**
52 **statewide coalition for state tax system**
53 **reform**

54
55 South Dakota Farmers Union calls for the
56 building of a coalition to address the tax
57 system. There is already a drastic need to
58 review the current tax system. In 2023, the
59 state cut the sales tax from 4.5% to 4.2%,
60 leaving an estimated \$104M hole in the state
61 budget. Future reductions in sales tax will
62 necessitate a strategy to offset the revenue
63 loss. In a proactive approach, SDFU
64 supports developing a comprehensive
65 solution for all of South Dakota. This
66 involves conducting research and
67 development to create a statewide revenue
68 system that considers the funding needs of
69 townships, counties, and educational
70 institutions.

71



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