



Dear Agriculture Committee,

On behalf of Nebraska Cures, I am writing to express our support for LB 1368, the Nitrogen Reduction Incentive Act. For 20 years, Nebraska Cures has supported policies rooted in science and strived to advance the quality of life and economy for Nebraskans. We believe that LB 1368 represents a crucial step forward in safeguarding Nebraska's invaluable natural resources while addressing the health risks associated with high nitrate levels in our water sources.

As Nebraska's leading industry, agriculture plays a crucial role in our state's economy and identity. However, it's essential to acknowledge the potential environmental and health implications of intensive farming practices. High levels of nitrates in water can pose serious health risks, particularly to vulnerable populations such as infants and pregnant women¹. By incentivizing farmers to reduce their use of commercial fertilizers and adopt innovative technologies, the Nitrogen Reduction Incentive Act not only protects our natural resources but also safeguards public health.

The bill's provision for a nitrogen reduction incentive program, administered by the Department of Natural Resources in collaboration with local resource districts, is a pragmatic approach to encouraging farmers to adopt more sustainable practices. By providing incentives for reducing commercial fertilizer usage and introducing biological nitrogen products, this program empowers farmers to make environmentally responsible choices while maintaining farm productivity.

Furthermore, the bill's commitment to periodic review mechanisms ensures accountability and adaptability. By regularly assessing reduction targets and consulting with stakeholders, the program can remain responsive to evolving agricultural practices and emerging technologies.

It is crucial to highlight that this legislation is not about imposing burdensome regulations on farmers but rather about empowering them to be part of the solution. By providing support and incentives, we can foster a culture of innovation and environmental stewardship within Nebraska's agricultural community.

In conclusion, LB 1368 represents a balanced and pragmatic approach to addressing the environmental and health challenges associated with high nitrate levels in our water sources. We urge the Agriculture Committee to support this important legislation for the benefit of our state's economy, environment, and public health.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David A. Crouse". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

David Crouse

Nebraska Cures Board President

¹ Nitrate/Nitrite Toxicity, Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, CDC
<https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/csem/nitrate-nitrite/cover-page.html>