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January 3, 2023

The Honorable Thomas J. Vilsack
Secretary of Agriculture
U. S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, D.C. 20250

Subject: Support for the Future Service Leaders Foundation's application for USDA Rural Economic Development Program funding

Dear Secretary Vilsack,

It is our pleasure to submit a letter of support for the Future Service Leaders Foundation and their application for assistance through the United States Department of Agriculture Rural Economic Development Program. Their proposal to construct a Rural Vitality Center is an innovative concept that we strongly believe will help to foster collaboration, innovation, and leadership opportunities for rural communities and their residents for generations. The Rural Vitality Center plan will create a new 350-acre campus that will offer the regions schools, businesses, and community organizations an agriculture focused space where over 2,000 participants can collaborate to solve today's agricultural, leadership, and entrepreneurship challenges. Our teachers, professionals, business and rural leaders need a high quality location to collaborate and train in order to deal with new trends in education, agriculture, and digital and technological developments.

This new venue will help our rural communities in Kansas be better prepared for the future of agriculture, education, and technology. We strongly support this project and the long term economic impact this initiative will have on the generations of learners and teachers in Kansas and in the United States. Currently there isn't such a location in Kansas, and with this addition, we believe that Kansas can be an excellent source for new agriculture innovation and training for generations to come.

Lastly, with all of the work focused on supporting rural communities at the national level, we also are committed to supporting this project as it progresses in the State of Kansas. Our office will be participating in their planning, programming, and efforts to increase the utilization of these new training opportunities for all rural communities in Kansas.

Thank you for your consideration of their application. We look forward to any questions or thoughts you might have that might help this project succeed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Trisha Purdon". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Trisha Purdon
Director, Kansas Office of Rural Prosperity