

Thursday, August 17th 2023

Senate Committee on Universities and Revenue

**Re: Senate Bill 332: Relating to: creating a no-sale event venue permit.**

**Michelle Ramirez-White – Policy Coordinator, Wisconsin Farmers Union**

Chair Senator Hutton and members of the committees, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony of Senate Bill 332.

Wisconsin Farmers Union’s grassroots, member-driven policy reads:

***“Tourism provides an economic bonus to rural areas. Family farmers should share the benefit from the economic advantages of tourism. Farmer ties to tourists enlighten the non-farm public on important agriculture issues and their relationship to the greater culture and economy.”***

While Wisconsin Farmers Union commends the bill authors for proposing legislation to modernize the laws that govern the sales, distribution and production of alcohol, we strongly urge this committee to eliminate the portion of the bill that would require private event venues to be permitted by the Department of Revenue.

There has been tremendous growth in agricultural tourism and interest in rural event venues in the past several years. Wisconsin Farmers Union welcomes this avenue for rural economic vitality and the opportunity for farms to diversify their income streams by hosting events in repurposed farm buildings.

Although we recognize the good intent of this bill, WFU has concerns that SB 332 would impose a heavy regulatory burden on on-farm event venues. Wisconsin Farmers Union respectfully asks the committee to remove the *No-sale event venue permit* section from the bill, or add on-farm event venues to the list of other venues that are exempt from the requirement to obtain a permit from the Department of Revenue.

Thank you for this opportunity to share Wisconsin Farmers Union’s thoughts on this issue.

Sincerely,

Michelle Ramirez-White

Policy Coordinator, Wisconsin Farmers Union