



# SCOTT FITZGERALD

WISCONSIN STATE SENATOR  
SENATE MAJORITY LEADER

July 24, 2019

Secretary-designee Brad Pfaff  
Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection  
2811 Agriculture Drive  
Madison, WI 53708

Dear Secretary-designee Pfaff:

Your flippant comments yesterday referring to farmer suicide is beneath your position and makes light of the seriousness of suicide. Mental health can be something that people struggle with for years, if not their whole lives, and your statements about “abandoning our state’s farmers” and “which five farmers” should be saved does nothing other than to create division on a subject that matters to all legislators.

The Wisconsin Legislature has passed numerous bills over the past two sessions to address mental health in our state, fund treatment, and expand care. Throughout 2019, a dedicated bi-partisan legislative task force on suicide prevention has met for months, with the objective of providing recommendations and drafting legislation to address this serious issue. In addition, the State Senate will take action on bills funding mental health programs this fall.

Your remarks yesterday on farmer suicide prevention were offensive and unproductive. If you truly care about farmers’ well-being, I hope that you will strive to work with legislators on addressing mental health in Wisconsin rather than releasing inflammatory statements.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott Fitzgerald".

Senator Scott Fitzgerald  
Majority Leader