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I, Ethyl Ruehman,

On behalf of myself as a community advocate, a member of the NWI Youth Climate Council, wholly support Heartland Communities vision 2050 “Greater Fort Wayne Area Regenerative Food System” project.

This project addresses some of the nation’s greatest challenges from a grassroots and community-centered approach for every member in the community, including farmers to those most marginalized. I cannot express the amount of need for this type of work, especially in the coming future, when soil has been depleted, droughts will increase and climate refugees from around the world will come to areas that are surrounding the great lakes. Programs like this are what will prepare resilient communities that would be vulnerable to this kind of growth.

As a student of Sustainable Public and Environmental Affairs studying policy, I know the critical amount of impact and work that needs to be done, and the limitations of policy alone to make it happen.

Sustainable, regenerative and localized food is some of the most critical assets in resilient urban communities. I have personally seen some of the intensive work that has been put into the development and intend to participate as Indiana’s integrated agriculture food and cultural systems grows. This organization is uniquely able to address their community's needs by centering on the people of Fort Wayne and is **EXTREMELY** well thought out. Their ability to expand could change the lives of many.

Sincerely,

Ethyl Ruehman