

John Monson's Candidate Statement:

Since 1987, as a congressional aide, a USDA County Director, USDA State Director in Minnesota, and finally, serving as a senior vice president for Market Strategies at AgStar, my career and passion have been defined by serving rural communities.

In working with the talented team at AgStar, I have had the good fortune of traveling rural America and the passion grows. As a leading private cooperative, AgStar has been committed to its mission of serving Agriculture and Rural America. My job and passion have been to invest in rural projects that enhance life in rural communities across America. We have developed a collaborative model to make investments. Over the last eight years, these investments now exceed \$800 million in projects across rural America, in partnership with many other cooperatives, private, public and nonprofit organizations.

We focus on the creation of jobs, economic activity and improving quality of life. We work closely with many cooperatives, and invest in cooperatives. It has been rewarding to lead an immigrant farmer program that has invested in cooperative organizations that represent a quickly growing demographic in American agriculture.

In addition, I currently serve as board chairman for the AgStar corporate-giving program, a \$1 million grant fund, to support rural communities. Finally, I oversee our Brand Marketing and Communications at AgStar, where telling our story of a private cooperative lender and its cooperative clients is critical to the growth of rural America.

All of our efforts coincide closely with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. All of this work is focused on a mission of serving rural America. We are a cooperative lender and a strong voice for rural America and the cooperative business model all across America, and worldwide. It is my honor to be considered as a candidate for the NCBA CLUSA Board. I look forward to adding my voice and experience.