May 12, 2016

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in support of the nomination for Lisa Shimkat as a Woman of Influence. I have known and worked with Lisa for more than 10 years. I have experienced first-hand her dedication to assisting Iowa’s small business. She has consistently lived the charge for women in business through her varied career, her community leadership and involvement, and her own professional enhancement.

My own economic development career has crossed paths with Lisa on many fronts. Our first project together was planning and hosting the Mid-Iowa economic development conference. While Lisa was Mid-Iowa SBDC regional director we co-hosted a couple of workshops for small business. We worked together to develop the curriculum for a series of “succession in business” workshops offered across Iowa with other SBDCs initiated by Lisa.

Lisa’s reputation statewide as the “go to person” for anything small business earned her invitations to present at EntreFest, serve as a judge for the Dream BIG contests, and a seat at the table for the “Entrepreneurial Forum” of collaborative resource providers. Lisa has recently joined the board of the Iowa Rural Development Council that I currently chair.

Lisa’s influence for Iowa’s small businesses was noted nationally. In 2010 she was named a “State Star” by the national Small Business Development Center organization, America’s SBDC. Lisa was chosen because of her exemplary work performance, significantly contributing to the organization’s economic development efforts, and showing a strong commitment to small businesses. She is truly a worthy Woman of Influence.

Sandy Ehrig

Economic Development Administrator Iowa Farm Bureau

5400 University Avenue

West Des Moines, Iowa 50266

515.225.5480 sehrig@ifbf.org