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NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Attorney General Kaul joins Lawsuit Against Deere & Company to Protect Farmers from Unfair Corporate Tactics, High Repair Costs

Suit alleges that Deere's monopoly practices unfairly drive-up farming equipment repair costs, restrict farmers ability to quickly seek repairs necessary for planting, harvesting

MADISON, Wis. – Attorney General Josh Kaul has joined four states and the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) in a lawsuit against agricultural equipment manufacturer Deere & Company (Deere) over its alleged use of unfair practices that have driven up equipment repair costs for farmers while also depriving farmers of the ability to make timely repairs on critical farming equipment, including tractors.

“This case is seeking to make the market for farming equipment repairs more competitive,” said Attorney General Kaul. “When Wisconsin farmers need to get their farming equipment repaired, they should be able to get the repairs at a fair price, without unnecessary delay.”

The complaint alleges that, for decades, Deere’s unlawful practices have limited the ability of farmers and independent repair providers to repair Deere equipment, forcing farmers to instead rely on Deere’s network of authorized dealers for necessary repairs. As alleged in the complaint, this unfair steering practice has boosted Deere’s multi-billion-dollar profits on agricultural equipment and parts, growing its repair parts business while burdening farmers with higher repair costs.

Durable, reliable, and easily repairable agricultural equipment is critical to American farmers. Yet, as the lawsuit alleges, Deere, which maintains a dominant market

share position across the large agricultural equipment market, has made it difficult for farmers to repair their own equipment or turn to local, independent repair providers.

The only fully functional software repair tool capable of performing all repairs on Deere equipment is produced by Deere. As alleged in the complaint, Deere makes this tool available only to Deere's authorized dealers, forcing farmers to solely rely on more expensive authorized dealers for critical repairs. By creating these restrictions, Deere has unlawfully acquired and maintained monopoly power in the market for certain repair services for Deere agricultural equipment, according to the complaint.

The lawsuit seeks to stop Deere's anticompetitive conduct by ordering, among other remedies, that Deere make available to owners of Deere large tractors and combines, as well as independent repair providers, access to its fully functional Service ADVISOR repair tool and any other repair resources available to authorized dealers.

Joining Wisconsin and the FTC in this lawsuit are the states of Arizona, Illinois, Michigan and Minnesota.