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May 17, 2022

Senator Carla Nelson

Senator Bill Weber

Senator Tom Bakk

Senator Paul Gazelka

Senator Ann Rest

Representative Paul Marquart

Representative Cheryl Youakim

Representative Dave Lislegard

Representative Kaohly Her

Representative Greg Davids

Dear Taxes Conference Committee Members:

The Land Stewardship Project's mission is to foster an ethic of stewardship for farmland, promote sustainable agriculture, and develop healthy communities. LSP represents over 4,500 households in Minnesota – primarily farmers and rural residents, as well as urban and suburban allies. Some of the Land Stewardship Project's greatest priorities are keeping small and mid-sized farmers on the land, growing the number of farmers stewarding the land, and advancing adoption of sustainable and regenerative agricultural practices.

I write in support today of the measure included in House File 3669 to provide \$22 million to Soil and Water Conservation Districts to bolster and equalize funding the critical roles and programs they provide (section 14, lines 130.4 to 131.24).

Our members have a keen interest in restoring and regenerating our soils, working to ensure all farmers have the resources they need to farm in ways that benefit their operations, their land and more broadly, our communities. The support farmers and landowners receive in both programmatic offerings and technical assistance from their local Soil and Water Conservation Districts are a critical piece of ensuring more soil health practices across our state are adopted to better protect and enhance our soil, water, and climate.

The funding included in HF 3669 to increase and equalize the funding available for SWCDs is a measure that will have great impacts for our farmers and especially rural communities, and we ask for the committee's support in this provision.

On behalf of our members, we urge you to include this measure in the final bill. With a historic budget surplus, you have a unique opportunity to deliver for farmers, rural Minnesotans, and our SWCDs this legislative session.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Amanda N. Koehler".

Amanda Koehler

LSP Policy Manager

akoehler@landstewardshipproject.org | 612-400-6355 (call or text)