1225 ESTABROOK DRIVE SAINT PAUL MINNESOTA 55103 WWW.COMOZOOCONSERVATORY.ORG

March 28, 2022

RECORDED INFORMATION
651.487.8200

CUSTOMER SERVICE OFFICE
651.487.8201

AA-ADA-EEO-EMPLOYER

Dear Sen Westrom
3201 Minnesota Senate Bldg
Saint Paul, MN 55155

RE: SF 4280

Dear Senator Westrom:

Como Park Zoo and Conservatory believes that the current bill with the exemptions for Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) accredited institutions is appropriate and a change will only weaken the protections that the current law provides. The facilities that are accredited through the AZA meet the highest standards for exemplary animal care and welfare. AZA accreditation standards and requirements represent decades of modernization utilizing science, experience and impact on guests and conservation.

The AZA accreditation is evaluated regularly by recognized experts in the profession. AZA's rigorous, scientifically based and publicly-available standards examine a facilities entire operation, including animal welfare, veterinary care, conservation, education, safety, facility, finance and more. AZA standards are performance-based and is continuously raising its stands as science continues to evolve in the area of animal care. U.S. agencies such as OSHA and USDA consider AZA standards as the "national" standard and often refer to AZA standards when evaluating other institutions.

AZA also offers a program for facilities interested in accreditation, called Pathway Toward Membership. The program provides advice and support along the journey, while orienting the facility to AZA programs while providing a 3-5 year coaching, support services, and advice towards application.

If you have further questions or would like to meet, or even walk through Como Park Zoo and Conservatory to see first-hand the standards in place, please reach out at michelle.furrer@ci.stpaul.mn.us or 651-207-0333.

Sincerely,

SAINT PAUL PARKS
AND RECREATION

Michelle Furrer
Director

CITY OF SAINT PAUL

MELVIN CARTER, MAYOR