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Chair Bill Ingebrigtsen
Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee
95 University Avenue W.
3207 Minnesota Senate Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

RE: Senate File 3020

March 21, 2022

Chair Ingebrigtsen and members of the Committee:

We write to convey The Nature Conservancy's support for SF 3020, which would direct \$5 million in general funds toward incentive payments and technical assistance for enrollees in the federal Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) for the purposes of conservation easements issues by the Board of Water and Soil Resources. Easements under this program can provide a variety of benefits for wildlife habitat, water quality and quantity.

CRP helps keep our most environmentally vulnerable lands in perennial cover, protecting and cleaning water before entering our lakes, rivers and streams. This program will also provide essential habitat for pollinators, grassland nesting birds and small mammals that continue to be threatened by loss of habitat. In the face of increasing land prices and rental costs, the state should support those landowners who have determined the highest and best use for their land is to enroll in a conservation program. Additionally, these funds leverage additional federal dollars and resources that could double or triple the state's investment.

Thank you for your work on behalf of the State of Minnesota.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephanie Pinkalla".

Stephanie Pinkalla
Government Relations Manager
The Nature Conservancy in Minnesota