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April 17, 2023

Minnesota Senate Finance Committee
Senator John Marty, Chair
95 University Avenue W.
Minnesota Senate Bldg., Room 3235
St. Paul, MN 55155

Re: Funding for Shooting Range Improvement Grants **Position: Support**

Dear Chair Marty and Committee Members:

The National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF) strongly supports funding contained in SF2438 (Hawj) for shooting sports facility grants. These grants are administered by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and are important for enhancing Minnesota's shooting sports heritage.

As the trade association for America's firearms, ammunition, hunting, and recreational shooting sports industry, the NSSF seeks to promote, protect, and preserve hunting and the shooting sports. NSSF has a membership of approximately 10,000 manufacturers, distributors, firearms retailers, shooting ranges, and sportsmen's organizations. Our manufacturer members make the firearms used by law-abiding Minnesota sportsmen and women, the U.S. military, and law enforcement agencies throughout the state.

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Shooting Range Improvement Grant Program has been a crucial funding source to increase shooting range capacity for the general public and especially for high school clay target shooters. Expanding Minnesota's shooting range capacity through these grants will increase opportunities during a time when the popularity and participation in the shooting sports is rapidly growing across all demographics.

NSSF opposes any attempts to prioritize grant funding that would go to ranges that prohibit the use of traditional (lead) ammunition, or mandate that a grant recipient cease allowing lead ammunition to be used. Traditional ammunition has been used for centuries without threatening human life and its use has not had a negative impact on wildlife populations.

The firearm industry encourages ranges to implement EPA best management practices (BMPs). Ranges work to make sure that shot fall zones are completely within range property boundaries. Finally, many ranges contract with lead reclamation companies to recover lead from range properties, and that lead is typically then recycled. These are just a few of the

ways that the firearm industry already works to increasingly mitigate environmental impacts that ranges might have.

Prohibiting the use of traditional ammunition at shooting facilities will significantly drive up the costs of participation in the shooting sports while creating artificial barriers to participation. This will especially be true for high school clay target league athletes where participants shoot multiple cases of ammunition each season and often have long distances to travel to find range space for practice and competitions.

Hunting, firearms and the shooting sports are part of the history, tradition and culture of Minnesota. Supporting expanded opportunities for participants to access outdoor shooting opportunities not only increases opportunities for shooting sports participants to enjoy being in the outdoors, but 11% of every firearm and ammunition purchase is dedicated to wildlife preservation and management.

For these reasons, the NSSF strongly supports additional funding for the Shooting Range Improvement Grant Program.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christopher M. Lee". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "C".

Christopher Lee