



Association of Minnesota Counties

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February 7, 2023

Senator Ann Rest
Chair, Senate Taxes Committee
328 Capitol Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Re: SF526 (Klein) Aid program establishment and appropriation for soil and water conservation districts

Dear Chair Rest and committee members:

The Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC), a membership-based organization representing all 87 Minnesota counties, appreciates the opportunity to offer our support of SF526 (Klein): Soil and Water Conservation Districts Aid Program.

Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD) are valued local partners that work closely with counties on local conservation and environmental protection efforts. Counties and SWCDs have shared interests and collaborate regularly on state programs, including local water management and wetland conservation. In addition, from county to county there maybe additional agreements in place to support implementation of programs for aquatic invasives species, feedlots, shoreland, riparian aid and septic systems. In turn, counties support the work of SWCD's with direct and in-kind aid, contract agreements, and redirection of program funding.

The work of SWCDs has long been viewed as shared state and local responsibility. AMC has supported establishing stable, ongoing state funding for SWCD's that will provide the certainty for staffing and operations necessary to perform their duties for Minnesota. Senator Klein's legislation, SF526, would accomplish that goal, and we encourage your support of this proposal.

Once again, we appreciate the opportunity to share our support of state funding for Soil and Water Conservation Districts. If you have any questions regarding AMC's position, please feel free to contact me at bmartinson@mncounties.org or 651-246-4156.

Sincerely,



Brian Martinson, Policy Analyst
Association of Minnesota Counties