



MASWCD

Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts

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May 6, 2025

Sen. Ann Rest
Chair, Senate Taxes Committee

Chair Rest and Senate Taxes Committee Members,

On behalf of the Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (MASWCD), I'd like to express our gratitude for the Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) Aid provisions included in the proposed amendment to SF 2371, the Senate Omnibus Tax Bill.

SWCDs are special purpose units of local government organized under Minnesota Statutes Chapter 103C. Professional conservation staff, with direction from locally elected boards, work in cooperation with private landowners toward our healthy soil and clean water goals.

We are tremendously grateful that SWCD Aid was established in Minnesota Statutes 477A.23 as an efficient and effective way for the state to contribute toward the costs of SWCDs delivering their statutory obligations. The past two years of \$15 million per year allowed our districts to better meet the growing workload they face in implementing projects, providing technical assistance with private landowners, and leveraging outside funding.

SWCDs recognize that the tough choices facing this committee as you assemble the state's biennial budget.

As demonstrated in the committee's handout, increasing SWCD aid to \$14.73 million into the future - means SWCDs can reliably maintain trained and credentialed staff to carry out the important work that we do – tackling much needed work on our woodlands, shorelands, agricultural lands, wetlands, urban landscapes, and much more, while having a meaningful economic impact in our communities.

Again, thank you for including SWCD Aid in the Senate Omnibus Tax Bill, and for your support of this important funding mechanism for Minnesota's statewide conservation delivery system. We look forward to working with you and our private landowner partners to advance good soil health and conservation practices.

Sincerely,

Sheila Vanney
Assistant Director
Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts