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Representative Fue Lee
485 State Office Building
House Capital Investment Committee
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155

February 15, 2023

Dear Chair Lee and Members of the House Capital Investment Committee,

Thank you for including several programs in the proposed delete-all amendment to HF669, which would address capital investment backlogs from the prior legislative session.

We are pleased to see several programs included that will direct resources to natural climate solutions that benefit people and nature across the state. We are specifically appreciative for the inclusion of general obligation bonds for the following programs:

- \$30,000,000 to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) for Betterment of Buildings which includes an appropriation that will support the modernization of the State Forest Nursery
- \$6,000,000 to the DNR for reforestation, which will support much-needed tree-planting on state-owned lands where timber harvests have occurred
- \$8,400,000 to the DNR for community tree planting grants, which will support expanded tree planting in cities
- \$10,700,000 to the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) for the Reinvest in Minnesota Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), which helps complete the state complete a financial matching agreement with the U.S. Department of Agriculture

TNC also supports the \$10,000,000 bonding appropriation to the Public Facilities Authority for lead service line replacement, which will help ensure that the water at Minnesotans' taps is safe to drink. Though this proposed appropriation is an important start to maximizing federal funds and opportunities, additional investments for replacement and mapping are encouraged to address this problem quickly and at scale. Furthermore, many of these programs should be considered for additional investments in future bills to address the full needs across the state.

As the committee considers a new bonding bill in 2023, we encourage the Capital Investment Committee and the legislature to continue to invest in programs that provide natural climate solutions and preserve biodiversity, above and beyond these backlog proposals. It is critically important that the state continue to make investments to protect our water quality in our state's lakes, rivers and streams and restore our trees and grasslands throughout rural and metro areas as an effective avenue to both address climate change and ensure future generations can enjoy our state's resources.

Sincerely,

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