

Name: Julie Sharpe, President of the Narrow River Land Trust

Bill: Article 5 Question 3 Green Economy Bonds

Section (f) State Land Acquisition Program – Against

Section (g) Local Land Acquisition Matching Grant Program – Against

Thank you for providing money in the Green Economy Bond for Land Acquisition and Conservation Easements, but I am against the Sections (f) and (g) for the following reasons.

- 1) There is no money in this Bond to support the Agricultural Land Preservation Commission (ALPC) to acquire agricultural land and agricultural easements in the state when the Commission has a backlog of properties in this program. By not supplying funding to the ALPC, we are leaving federal matching grant money on the table. These lands are under enormous development pressure, and once they are gone, we can never get them back. For climate resiliency reasons, food security reasons, protection of our cultural heritage reasons, please add \$3mm to the Bond for the ALPC.
- 2) The \$3mm allocated for the State Land Acquisition and Conservation Easement is not enough money for the program. Because this program was zeroed out in the last bond issue, there is a backlog of properties in line for this funding as well. Funding needs to be \$5mm to meet higher prices in the market and the demand for land conservation for the funds in the land trust community.
- 3) Likewise, there is not enough money in the Local Land Acquisition Matching Grants Fund. Land values have rocketed during the Covid epidemic and have not shown any signs of coming down. Even though land trusts are busy raising money on their own, \$2mm from the state could be used up in just a few deals. This fund needs to be closer to \$3mm to meet the current demand.

Thank you for your consideration of my comments.

Sincerely,

Julie Sharpe, President  
Narrow River Land Trust