MICHIGAN ASSOCIATION of CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

Michigan Association of Conservation Districts
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To the Honorable Members of the Michigan Senate and House Appropriations Committees
Michigan Legislature
Lansing, MI

On behalf of the Michigan Association of Conservation Districts (MACD), representing all 75 Conservation Districts across Michigan, we respectfully request increased operational funding for Conservation Districts in the FY 2027 state budget. The undersigned legislators join MACD in supporting this request.

Conservation Districts are local special-purpose units of state government serving all 83 counties. They provide voluntary, practical assistance to farmers, forest landowners, and communities to protect water quality, reduce soil erosion, and strengthen Michigan's agricultural economy.

Operational funding is the foundation that allows Districts to deliver these services. For every $1 in state operational funding, Districts leverage approximately 7:1 in additional state funding. There is an even greater impact when federal agricultural conservation programs are included. In total, Conservation District programs created $78 million in economic impact for a $3 million Sate investment.

While the current funding has yielded significant results, there is greater need. Our goal is to secure $13 million in statewide operational funding to ensure consistent capacity across every county. This approach could include local matching components to encourage partnership and shared investment.

We support increased operational funding to strengthen Michigan's conservation delivery system and ensure effective implementation of state and federal resources.

Thank you for your consideration.

Rivka Hodgkinson
Executive Director MACD