August 5, 2019

The Honorable Ben Allen
California State Senate
State Capitol Building
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Senate Bill 45 (Allen) -- SUPPORT IF AMENDED

Dear Senator Allen,

We are writing to encourage you to incorporate critical urban green infrastructure language into your proposed Wildfire, Drought, and Flood Protection Bond Act of 2020 that would shift all of the undersigned organization to a Support position on Senate Bill 45.

On July 3rd, conservation stakeholders filed a citizen’s initiative with the Secretary of State that would place a $7.9 billion Wildfire Prevention, Safe Drinking Water, Drought Preparation, and Flood Protection Bond Act on the 2020 ballot. The bond includes critical investments in numerous priorities in SB 45, including urban green infrastructure. In fact, the bond allocates $975 million “to make communities in urban areas and vulnerable populations more resilient to the impacts of climate change,” and includes within this allocation the following provision:

80227. Of the funds made available by Section 80226, one hundred fifty million dollars ($150,000,000) of the funds pursuant to this chapter shall be allocated for urban greening projects pursuant to subdivision (a) of Section 75129, including at least fifty millions dollars ($50,000,000) pursuant to Section 4799.12 to protect or augment California’s urban forests.

We strongly urge you to incorporate Sections 80227 and 80226 verbatim into your SB 45. This level of proposed investment in critical urban green infrastructure could blaze a path towards truly transformative projects in communities across California that are already experiencing more extreme heat days due to climate change. By creating more green space and providing more shade trees in these urban areas, SB 45 would send a very strong signal that there is a commitment in California to address the increasing urban heat island effect, and the increasing number of human lives lost as a result of it, in a meaningful and impactful way.

We strongly support these suggested amendments, and believe they are consistent with the intent of your measure. We look forward to offering full support of Senate Bill 45, and thank you in advance for your leadership on this issue.

Sincerely,