

August 1, 2012

Dylan GM Corbett
Grant Specialist, Southwest and Central USA
Catholic Campaign for Human Development
Dept. of Justice, Peace and Human Development
US Conference of Catholic Bishops
3211 4th St. NE, Washington, DC 20017-1194

Dear Mr. Corbett:

On July 10th, Land Stewardship Project (LSP) received notification in writing from Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD) that a grant for \$48,000 had been approved, pending completion of the grant agreement and supporting documents. Based on this commitment, we reported that the grant had been secured and the work (the third year of this grant) would proceed in our annual plans and budgets sent to the LSP Board for approval at the annual meeting in mid-July.

Then, on July 23rd, LSP staff member Doug Nopar was informed by CCHD that the Land Stewardship Project needs to withdraw its membership from Minnesota Council of Non-Profits and TakeAction Minnesota or "CCHD will necessarily find LSP in violation of its 2011-12 grant agreement and ineligible for a 2012-13 grant."

We disagree that LSP is in violation of either grant agreement and respectfully submit that LSP has been and continues to meet the contract stipulations that we do not participate in or promote activities that contradict the moral and social teachings of the Catholic Church.

The organizations that were identified in the letter, TakeAction Minnesota and Minnesota Council of Nonprofits, are valued allies in LSP's work towards racial and economic justice and stewardship of farmland. We take issue with several points in the letter.

1. The Grant agreement states LSP cannot participate in coalitions that oppose Catholic moral or social teachings and implies TakeAction Minnesota and Minnesota Council of Nonprofits are such coalitions. They are not coalitions. Instead, they are nonprofit organizations. TakeAction Minnesota moves Minnesotans to active grassroots democracy that builds social, racial and economic justice. LSP is one of 26 organizational and 14,000 individual members. Minnesota Council of Nonprofits works to inform, promote connect and strengthen individual nonprofits and the nonprofit sector. LSP is one of 2,000 members.

2. Neither TakeAction Minnesota nor Minnesota Council of Nonprofits has as part of its organizational purpose or agenda, which we interpret as the founding organizational purpose or agenda, work opposed to the moral or social teachings of the Catholic Church. Again, the mission of TakeAction Minnesota is to pursue social, racial and economic justice. The mission of the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits is to strengthen the nonprofit sector and individual nonprofit organizations in Minnesota. These missions are consistent with the mission of CCHD, and the moral teachings of the Catholic Church.

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3. In the shorter-term, these organizations may engage in various initiatives, but their members are not bound to support or participate in them, especially those of a secondary nature to the mission of the organization. LSP has taken no position on nor does it knowingly promote work opposing the proposed Minnesota constitutional amendment defining marriage, through any organization in which we are a member.

When asked by others to join a coalition organized for the purpose of defeating the Minnesota amendment defining marriage, LSP declined to sign-on and participate.

LSP works to promote racial equity and support for immigrant rights as it relates to the food and agriculture system. We are more effective in that mission when we work with allies who act forthrightly and strongly on these issues. TakeAction Minnesota is a strong advocate on immigrant rights. LSP is also more effective in pursuing our mission when we are a well-managed and efficient organization, and we look to the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits for guidance in these areas. For the above reasons, LSP declines to sever our membership in these organizations

Since the founding of Land Stewardship Project in 1982, the teachings of the Catholic Bishops concerning justice and care of the land have inspired our work. The Midwestern Catholic Bishops' publication "Strangers and Guests: Towards Community in the Heartland," has served as a formative and ongoing document for the Land Stewardship Project. The ongoing financial support of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, through CCHD, has provided crucial support for our work to promote stewardship of farmland and social and economic justice in the food and agriculture system. We hope CCHD will choose to continue its long standing relationship with LSP in our work to make those values a practical reality on the land and with farmers and farmworkers in the food system.

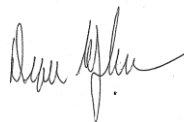
If LSP's funding is revoked, the winners are clear: the promoters and backers of industrial-scale factory farms and crop operations; those wanting to take away local zoning powers from counties and townships for unbridled "development" of rural lands; those concerned with LSP's efforts to raise awareness about the exploitation of immigrant workers on large agricultural and livestock operations and processing plants; and those threatened by our work to expose excessive corporate power and its impact on rural communities and the land. It is important to note that these interests have been working to block LSP funding by CCHD for years. Will they at last succeed?

We trust not. We look forward to CCHD's continued partnership in our shared concern for stewardship and justice on the land, on the terms laid out in LSP's grant proposal which CCHD approved. Attached is the grant agreement with LSP signatures.

Sincerely,



George Boody
Executive Director



Dennis Johnson
Board Chair

Encl.