

August 26, 2020

Governor Tim Walz
130 State Capitol
St. Paul, MN 55155

Senate Majority Leader Paul Gazelka
3113 Senate Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Speaker Melissa Hortman
463 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Senate Minority Leader Susan Kent
2227 Senate Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

House Minority Leader Kurt Daudt
267 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Senator David Senjem, Chair
Capital Investment Committee
3401 Senate Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Representative Mary Murphy, Chair
Capital Investment Committee
343 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Governor Walz and Legislative Leaders:

As community leaders and design and construction industry leaders, we are writing to express our extreme disappointment and frustration over the inability of the legislature to pass a significant capital bonding bill to repair and protect publicly owned assets for the second year in a row. The lack of ability to work together and compromise in order to address critical needs during a global pandemic is unacceptable.

While Minnesota's economy struggles to recover and local governments are reeling from unexpected costs and revenue cuts, the state needs to do its job and invest in needed infrastructure improvements that will make our state safer, improve our economic competitiveness, and create needed jobs.

We have worked throughout the regular session and two special sessions to let you know how desperately needed this bonding bill is for counties, cities, townships, workers, families, and the design and construction industry. Agreement must be reached on a package that is balanced and that addresses many of the critical infrastructure needs in our state including wastewater projects, building repairs at campuses, replacement of structurally deficient bridges, repairs to local roads, facilities to improve bus service, and critical safety improvements at rail crossings. It's time to finish the job and get this bonding bill passed into law.

At a time of historically low interest rates and an unprecedented economic collapse, there is no reason – only excuses – for not passing a capital bonding bill that invests in our state economy. The proposed bonding bill will create tens of thousands of jobs and will leverage federal and local dollars to complete over \$2 billion worth of needed projects. These projects will not go away; they will only become more expensive for taxpayers.

The consequences for failing to act will be real for communities whose projects have serious safety and health implications. In Bemidji, per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) levels have forced the city to shut down several of its wells, and the city can no longer meet Minnesota Department of Health guidelines for PFAS in its water supply. In Murray County, wells have been found with high levels of arsenic. Requested funding in the bonding bill will allow the Red Rock Rural Water system to provide safe drinking water through an investment that would be very difficult without state assistance.

Once again, the residents and businesses of Henderson are dealing with flooding on top of the pandemic impacts. Three major roads run through Henderson: Highway 93, County Road 6 and Highway 19. All three are prone to flooding — and all three were intermittently shut down over more than 60 days last year. Highway 93 was just closed again due to flooding. It's time to finally fix this problem.

We understand the need to refrain from passing the bonding bill around the time of the August bond sale. Our request is that you all come together to reach agreement on a bonding bill now, and that you pass the bill during a special session as early as possible in September.

As Minnesota businesses struggle to stay alive, we know that some will close permanently. The longer we wait for state and federal assistance, the greater the permanent damage will be to our economy.

The capital bonding bill has been negotiated and vetted for months. Design and construction projects are ready to go and there has never been a time when an investment is more needed in our workers and businesses than right now.

We respectfully ask that you come together and do the work of the 2020 Legislative Session — passing a capital bonding bill. We understand that an election is coming in November, but you need to keep working throughout the month of September until the job is done and a bill is passed and signed into law. Minnesota businesses, workers, families, and communities are depending on you.

Sincerely, the Undersigned Organizations

Aggregate & Ready Mix Association of Minnesota
American Council of Engineering Companies of Minnesota (ACEC/MN)
American Institute of Architects Minnesota (AIA-MN)
American Society of Civil Engineers, Minnesota Section (ASCE)
Associated General Contractors of Minnesota (AGC)
Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC)
Association of Women Contractors (AWC)
Bricklayers and Allied Craft Workers Local 1
Carpentry Contractors Association (CCA)
Cement Masons Local Union 633
City Engineers Association of Minnesota (CEAM)
Clean Water Action
Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities (CGMC)
Concrete Pavement Association of Minnesota (CPAM)
The Ecumenical Water Initiative
Electrical Association
Fix the Pipes Coalition

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 110
International Union of Elevator Constructors Local 9
International Union of Operating Engineers- Local 49
League of Minnesota Cities (LMC)
LIUNA Minnesota & North Dakota
Mankato Area Environmentalists
Minneapolis Building and Construction Trades Council
Metro Cities
Metro Association of Plumbing Heating and Cooling Contractors
Minnesota Asphalt Pavement Association (MAPA)
Minnesota Association of Plumbing and Heating Cooling Contractors
Minnesota Association of Small Cities
Minnesota Association of Townships
Minnesota Building and Construction Trades Council
Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy
Minnesota Concrete and Masonry Contractors Association (MC&MCA)
Minnesota Concrete Pipe Association (MnCPA)
Minnesota County Engineers Association
Minnesota Drywall and Plaster Association (MDPA)
Minnesota Environmental Contractors Association (MECA)
Minnesota Environmental Partnership
Minnesota Floorcovering Contractors Association (MFCA)
Minnesota Inter-County Association (MICA)
Minnesota Interfaith Power and Light
Minnesota Laborers- Employers Cooperation & Education Trust (LECET)
Minnesota Mechanical Contractors Association
Minnesota Minority Goods and Services Association (MMGSA)
Minnesota Painting and Wallcovering Employers Association (MPWEA)
Minnesota Pipe Trades Association
Minnesota Public Transit Association (MPTA)
Minnesota Rural Counties
Minnesota Subcontractors Association
Minnesota Transportation Alliance
Minnesota Utility Contractors Association (MUCA)
Minnesota Well Owners Organization
Move Minnesota
National Electrical Contractors Association – Duluth Chapter
National Electrical Contractors Association - Minneapolis Chapter
National Electrical Contractors Association - St. Paul Chapter
Northern Mechanical/Plumbing Contractors' Association
North Central States Regional Council of Carpenters
North Metro Mayors Association
Red River Watershed Management Board
RETHOS: Places Reimagined
Roofers and Waterproofers Local 96
Sheet Metal, Air Conditioning & Roofing Contractors Association (SMARCA, Inc.)
SMART-TD
Thermal Insulation Contractors Association (TICA)