



100% Campaign
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February 3, 2021

Chair Lee and Members of the Committee,

We're writing to applaud the Committee for its work in January and February reviewing the bonding process, examining Minnesota's racial equity and climate challenges, and exploring our shared opportunities to improve communities across our state.

The last three weeks have put Minnesota's capital investments in context. Bonding is a powerful tool. However, state capital investments on their own are not enough. Each project our state supports brings together diverse sources of funding, connects multiple levels of government, and unites a wide array of stakeholders. Each project helps create a place where Minnesotans will live, work, learn, or recreate for decades. **People are at the center of each bonding proposal.**

With this in mind, we urge the committee to consider three criteria as you decide how to respond to the acute needs of communities by making long-term investments for the state.

First, we urge the committee to make equitable investments. As you consider proposals, we hope members will keep in mind the students walking through the doors, the families biking on the trails, and the first responders doing their jobs. Our state's investments make more possible for Minnesotans. We hope those investments will be made in communities that have too often been under-resourced, in particular, the places where Black, Indigenous, people of color, and lower-income Minnesotans live.

Dr. Bruce Corrie's [presentation](#) on January 26th provided a clear picture of the stakes for Minnesota. By underinvesting, our state is missing opportunities to bring everyone's talents to the table, as both users of and builders of our state's infrastructure. The [purchase](#) a 155-acre farm with the Hmong American Farmers Association was an excellent example of this kind of success. The [presentation](#) from the University of Minnesota's Center for Small Towns on January 28th included ideas on how these equity-minded investments can happen in every corner of Minnesota.

Second, we urge the committee to make climate-adapted investments. As we build for the long-run, we ought to prepare for both the extreme weather events and the chronic stresses that our changing climate is exacerbating. Many proposals do this directly, through flood mitigation or emergency management, for example. Others do this less directly, through building design or protecting valuable historic assets. On February 2nd, Mark Kulda of the Insurance of Federation of Minnesota made the costs of inaction very clear during his testimony on [claims derived](#) from extreme weather events since 1998. We hope that you'll ask those making requests if they've factored climate impacts into their project planning.

Third, we urge the committee to invest in projects that help lower our state's greenhouse gas emissions. Fortunately, prior legislatures have already crafted a number of these requirements. The B3 Sustainable Building Guidelines (M.S. 16B.325), the consideration of

Geothermal and Solar in HVAC systems (M.S. 16B.326), the Energy Conservation Standard (M.S. 16B.335, subd.4), and the Solar Energy in State Buildings (M.S. 16B.323) all stand out. These provide a floor that projects must meet but should be encouraged to surpass. Likewise, we hope you'll encourage investments that will lessen our aggregate demand for fossil fuels, like those that support multi-modal transportation options or install combined heat and power systems. The January 29th testimonies of Sam Rockwell of [Move Minnesota](#) and Ben Passer of [Fresh Energy](#) shared excellent examples of strategies to accomplish this.

Finally, your bonding decisions are also happening in the context of other policy tools that the state has available. For example, the state should encourage and support the use of pre-proposal tools, like [climate vulnerability assessments](#) (described by MPCA Assistant Commissioner Katrina Kessler on February 2nd) and [racial equity impact assessments](#) (described by the staff of Voices for Racial Justice on January 27th). Similarly, the state has a role to play in funding other project expenses such as operational costs or clean energy investments. Please continue to think holistically about how you can address the challenges of climate change and racial, gender, and economic equity. Bonding plays a critical role, one made more effective when aligned with the work of other legislative committees and the further efforts of state and local government, philanthropy, and the private sector.

We make Minnesota by investing together in our public buildings, transportation systems, parks and trails, and public lands. You can make Minnesota better by keeping the people using and building that infrastructure front of mind as you work together in 2021-22.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Chris

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