



April 7, 2021

The Honorable Mohamud Noor, Chair  
House Workforce Division  
379 State Office Building  
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Dear Representative Noor:

We write with regard to the House Omnibus Workforce bill (DE) and to ask for reconsideration for inclusion of the \$250,000 ProStart/Hospitality Tourism Management Program grant (HF1324).

As we testified before the committee, no industry has been hit harder financially by the COVID-19 pandemic than the hospitality industry. Workforce is going to be a critical component for the economic recovery of this industry, which is projected to require multiple years. HF1324 represents a bipartisan, commonsense investment in the economic recovery of an industry that is a critical engine to the Minnesota economy. This is a very modest proposal, similar to the grant in the bill for the SciTech program that's been in place for several years and a successful model.

While the cost of the program to the state is extremely modest (\$250,000 represents one-one-thousandth of the spending in the omnibus bill), it can have a big impact on the recovery of the hospitality industry. The ProStart and HTMP programs are successful national programs that are already in 100 Minnesota high schools and have provided workforce training to thousands of students. Expanding these programs in more high schools across our state is critical to developing the workforce of the future and to the economic recovery of this industry.

In addition to the \$1.5 billion budget surplus and over \$2 billion in reserves, Minnesota is slated to receive nearly \$8 billion in funding from the American Rescue Plan. Of these funds, the federal legislation includes \$2.5 billion dedicated to a State fund that is intended to target hospitality and tourism (among other recipients). Specifically, Section 9909 of the federal law states that this relief may include:

“...assistance to households, small businesses, and non-profits, or aid to impacted industries such as **tourism, travel, and hospitality.**” [emphasis added].

We strongly encourage the committee to reconsider the inclusion of the ProStart/HTMP provision in the Omnibus Workforce bill.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Liz Rammer  
President & CEO

cc: Members of the House Workforce Division and Ways and Means Committee  
House Speaker Melissa Hortman  
House Minority Leader Kurt Daudt