



Legislation Text

File #: RES 10-1602, **Version:** 1

Approving the City of Saint Paul's 2011 Legislative Agenda.

WHEREAS, the City of Saint Paul is a major center of commerce and business activity; and

WHEREAS, cities provide important public services including police, fire, public works, code enforcement, libraries, parks and recreation, housing and economic development, and city administration; and

WHEREAS, the City of Saint Paul, as the Capital City, is the host community to a wealth of cultural, educational, and entertainment assets of statewide importance which contribute to our regional economic competitiveness; and

WHEREAS the City of Saint Paul continues to act with purpose to ensure that people in our region can live and work in a diverse, vibrant community with quality educational opportunities, safe streets and modern infrastructure;

WHEREAS, the Central Corridor light rail project and redevelopment of University Avenue marks an undertaking of statewide significance that must leverage private investment and provide support for existing businesses in order to maximize job creation; and

WHEREAS, the City of Saint Paul is challenged to address the societal impacts related to the mortgage foreclosure crisis, academic achievement gap, employment disparities, and the concentration of poverty; and

WHEREAS, the breakdown in State and local government partnership is unfairly shifting the tax burden to the property tax. Now therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the following items are the legislative agenda of the City of Saint Paul for the 2011 Minnesota legislative session:

REVENUE

- Advocate for improving the Local Government Aid formula to restore previous cuts, reduce the year-to-year volatility of aid levels that cities receive and reform the formula to consider inflation in the cost of providing city services as well as other factors that reflect current economic and tax base conditions.
- Support the elimination of State imposed levy limits and ensure maximum flexibility for local revenue options.
- Support strategies for regional tax base sharing including fiscal disparities and sales tax equalization.
- Advocate for clarification on the City's hotel tax.
- Advocate for fair and equitable distribution of new revenue as a result of the passage of the constitutional amendment to fund conservation, the environment, and the arts.
- Support the removal of sales tax on all City purchases, including materials for public works, public

safety, and water distribution.

- Support clarification of online travel companies and local hotel occupancy taxes.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT

- Advocate for the following projects in the 2011 State Bonding Bill, including:
 - o Saint Paul Outdoor Recreation and Team Sports Initiative (SPORTS): Regional Ball Park -\$25M
 - o Asian Pacific Cultural Center: \$9M
- Support the following projects:
 - o Support Phalen/Keller Regional Park improvement requests
 - o Support request of funds for Saint Paul Port Authority priorities, including failed dock wall replacement and 3M infrastructure
 - o Support Minnesota Housing's request for area housing programs
 - o Support request of funds by Ready 4 K to rehabilitate early education facilities
 - o Support request of funds for Saint Paul's Union Depot
 - o Support request of funds for Library Accessibility Improvement Grants through MELSA
 - o Support request of funds from District Energy for Central Corridor Infrastructure
 - o Support request of funds for Metropolitan State University

TRANSPORTATION

- Support Tax Increment financing for Transit Oriented Development
- Support Transit Investments: Union Depot is a critical hub for transportation in eastern Minnesota and the Central Corridor is the lifeline of that hub. The City of Saint Paul supports working with other communities to build a 21st century transit and transportation system in eastern Minnesota.
- Support MnDOT's efforts in continued maintenance funding and other additional resources to better meet the department's needs.
- Support enactment and funding for a statewide Complete Streets policy, requiring that all new and reconstructed streets accommodate all users of those streets, including motor vehicles, pedestrians, bicycles, and people in wheelchairs.
- Support additional resources to continue to improve the transit network in the City of Saint Paul. Saint Paul encourages the Metropolitan Council to maintain much-needed bus service during and after the construction of Central Corridor.
- Support policies that emphasize connecting transit-dependent workers with employment centers.
- Support funding of a statewide effort to educate motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians about the rules of the road and best practices in order to increase safety and decrease crashes, injuries, and fatalities.

- Support incentives to use local steel for Central Corridor and other transit construction.

EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- Support the extension of the Building Jobs Coalition legislative package from the 2010 legislative session.
- Support recommendations made by the Mayors' Green Jobs Initiative that will create and expand green jobs in Saint Paul with the overarching objectives to espouse green manufacturing policies benefiting core cities and to achieve as much energy efficiency as possible.
- Support efforts to address the employment disparity gap by increasing funding for job search assistance, skills training, childcare, and related programs to help people find and retain employment.
- Support tax incentives for companies that hire and retain disadvantaged workers.
- Oppose cuts to after school community learning program funds.
- Support the restoration of original funding levels to Youth Job Corps, and ensure fair administrative costs of the program.
- Support initiatives of partnering organizations such as Ready 4 K, Youth Community Connections and local School Districts as appropriate and as they complement programs administered in Saint Paul.
- Support Pre-K Allowance program funds.
- Support the appointment of representative of public libraries to the Governor's Workforce Development Council.
- Support permanent funding for the Power of You Program.
- Support State funding for a statewide study of Youth after School Transportation needs and programs.
- Support Second Chance Coalition legislation reforming qualification requirements for EMS Academy and EMT applicants.
- Support legislation prohibiting discrimination for school lunch, including no child turned away, no child stigmatized, and no collection agencies for school lunch debt.

PUBLIC SAFETY

- Advocate for elimination of the sunset on Saint Paul's driver's license diversion program with no changes to the current program.
- Support maintaining cities' abilities to affectively prosecute quality of life crimes and impose penalties for those crimes.
- Support permanent State funding for the Survivor Resources Program administered by the Saint Paul Police Department.
- Support data practices changes in conjunction with Saint Paul's Blue Print for Safety.

- Support appropriations changes to the Minnesota Fire Safety Account to fund critical services.
- Oppose legislation establishing a Minnesota Board of Residential Construction.
- Support efforts to formalize ambulance service repayment programs.
- Support inclusion of Saint Paul public safety services in the planning and design of a Statewide Emergency Operations Center, and use of the current statewide plan for regional training centers.
- Support the establishment of a Disaster Contingency Fund.
- Oppose the Secure Communities Legislation that requires that requires proof of citizenship.
- Support adding assaultive behavior, damage to property, obstruction of legal process and disorderly conduct to acts constituting a nuisance so as to address problem properties.

JOB CREATION & COMMUNITY STABILITY

- Advocate for Accelerated Housing Recovery Legislation through the use of housing replacement districts, general law pooling provisions, property maintenance provisions and vacant building legislation.
- Advocate for stable statewide funding to address neighborhood recovery, housing preservation, and increased affordable housing supply as a direct result of the mortgage foreclosure crisis. Support collaborations with Minnesota Housing Partnership, Minnesota Foreclosure Partners Council and others on priority housing issues, including:
 - o Restoring housing markets in communities impacted by foreclosures;
 - o Rehabilitating vacant and abandoned houses for economic recovery; and
 - o Providing a housing safety net for vulnerable home owners.
- Support expansion of programs to provide low cost financing to improve the energy efficiency of existing homes and buildings, particularly those in low and moderate income communities hit by the foreclosure/vacant housing crisis. This may also include working with utilities on shut-off notifications and access to homeowners prior to April 15.
- Support limited and targeted use of eminent domain in distressed neighborhoods with heavy concentrations of vacant and foreclosed houses and/or commercial properties as a result of the mortgage foreclosure crisis.
- Support financing tools and revisions to TIF legislation that would more easily enable land assembly for commercial and industrial development.
- Support incentives allowing the Ford Plant to continue operations, enhancing retention of employees and job growth opportunities.
- Support State funding for University Enterprise Laboratories.
- Support dedicated State funding for programs at the Department of Employment and Economic Development focusing on women and minority-owned businesses, redevelopment areas, and transit improvement areas.

- Support funding for operations and maintenance of regional parks.
- Support incentives, mandates, and policies that increase solar and thermal production for public and private entities in conjunction with the Solar Energy Grant awarded to Saint Paul and Minneapolis by the US Department of Energy.
- Support efforts to create a fund for construction of grocery stores in underserved neighborhoods in urban and rural areas.
- Support the removal of property tax exemptions for property of the Metropolitan Airport Commission surrounding the airport at Holman Field.
- Support legislation directing State funds for planning purposes to enhance the Warner Road Bridge as part of the overall improvements being made to the bridge in 2010.
- Support modifications to liquor laws clarifying a City's ability to impose license restrictions.
- Support programs to fund loans and grants to businesses along University Ave during construction of Central Corridor.
- Support efforts to ease restrictions and allow future growth of composting of organic material.
- Oppose elimination of Solid Waste Management Tax.

GENERAL MUNICIPAL ADVOCACY

- Support the 2011 legislative agendas of the League of Minnesota Cities, MetroCities, and Ramsey County and the Saint Paul Public School District, except in cases of conflict.
- Support a State demonstration project in the City of Saint Paul as a precursor to ensuring that all children in the State have access to adequate health insurance.
- Support the rights of cities to manage their operations without inappropriate interference from the State. The State should not attempt to coerce cities to change their ordinances by threatening to hold property tax relief for city residents. Local voters are the appropriate authority to hold local governments accountable for their ordinances.
- Support regional planning and governance that foster investments in core cities by utilizing current infrastructure and taking advantage of existing housing stock.
- Monitor legislation affecting Minnesota Critical Areas and its current rulemaking process.