

January 25, 2016

The Honorable Mark Dayton
Office of the Governor
116 Veterans Service Building
20 West 12th Street
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear Governor Dayton:

On behalf of the University of Minnesota, thank you for your strong support of the University in your 2016 capital investment bonding recommendations. Your commitment ensures that students across Minnesota will be prepared for careers through which they will solve the complex challenges we'll all face in the future.

The projects requested by the University for consideration in 2016 share common principles: they drive research and innovation, they are fiscally responsible, and they align with our strategic goals. Most importantly, our projects position the University to solve the future problems of our state that we cannot now even imagine.

HEAPR remains the University's highest bonding priority and is reflected in your bonding recommendations. Today, 43 percent of University buildings are more than 50 years old. HEAPR funds bring these aging buildings up to code, ensure energy efficiency, and enable us to prepare students for future careers. Your recommended investment in HEAPR will help maximize the effectiveness and extend the life of the University's 29 million square feet of infrastructure, 7.7 million of which are in poor or critical condition.

The recommended investment of \$27.2 million in funding for a Chemistry and Advanced Materials Sciences Building on the University of Minnesota's Duluth campus will advance our mission and benefit the local economy. The existing chemistry building at UMD serves over 5,500 students, but is almost 70 years old. The new building will create rich learning opportunities, put more students into the local workforce, and strengthen our partnerships with regional businesses and industry.

Your recommendation of \$66.7 million to create a new Health Sciences Education Facility for the University's Academic Health Center will support interdisciplinary team-based learning and care, and matches the recommendations made by your 2015 Blue Ribbon Commission on the University's Medical School. Seventy percent of our state's health professionals are educated at the AHC. This facility will replace over 100,000 square feet of outdated facilities that do not support fundamental changes underway in the education and training of tomorrow's health care professionals.

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Finally, the \$4.4 million investment recommendation in a Plant Growth Research Facility on the St. Paul campus will help protect the University's rare plants collection and provide hands-on learning opportunities for Minnesota's future plant geneticists, growers, and agricultural and environmental scientists. The current facility, built in 1974, is deteriorating and energy inefficient, and it does not provide appropriate space or access for critical research and hands-on learning.

The four projects included in your bonding recommendations are essential to keeping our state at the forefront of research and educating tomorrow's professionals and leaders. These four projects, along with the University's two remaining requests—\$16 million for Academic and Student Experience Investments and \$22 million for the renovation of Pillsbury Hall—will ensure that our students meet 21st century challenges by preparing in 21st century facilities.

Again, thank you for supporting the University's 2016 capital investment bonding request. We look forward to working with you and the legislature in the weeks ahead to fund these important priorities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "EKaler", written in a cursive style.

Eric W. Kaler
President

EWK:jb