

Office of Governor Tim Walz  
& Lt. Governor Peggy Flanagan  
130 State Capitol  
75 Rev Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
St. Paul, MN 55155

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

Speaker Melissa Hortman  
Minnesota House of Representatives  
463 State Office Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155

## Minneapolis & St. Paul Impacted Businesses & Community Organizations

May 7, 2021

Dear Governor Walz, Lt. Governor Flanagan, Majority Leader Gazelka & Speaker Hortman,

**As the 2021 legislative session nears the end and you contemplate final budget negotiations, we ask that you prioritize investments to support rebuilding and recovery efforts in Minneapolis and St. Paul.**

The unrest in Minneapolis and St. Paul, sparked by the murder of George Floyd, sent shock waves throughout our state, the country, and the world. As we continue to fight for racial justice and an equitable recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, we also need your commitment to help small BIPOC and immigrant owned businesses damaged by the unrest. Throughout the 2021 legislative session and the past year many small business owners, that had their lives completely turned around, continued to show up and advocate not only for themselves, but also for every impacted business on Lake Street, in North Minneapolis and along University Avenue in St. Paul. We can say without a doubt that funding is urgently needed to help small businesses and to preserve these important culturally significant economic corridors. Helping in this recovery effort is not only the right thing to do, economically it is the smart thing. **Please prioritize the use of Appropriation Bonds and/or state American Rescue Plan funds coming to help support these rebuilding and recovery efforts.**

Without the ability to support property acquisition, preservation, and new development, these communities are at risk of losing local ownership and control. It took decades of investment and risk from our immigrant and BIPOC communities to build up these businesses that directly serve their communities and if the state does not step in now, we risk permanently losing these vibrant economic cultural corridors. With state investments, we have the opportunity to invest in strategies grounded in community-led development and wealth creation for BIPOC entrepreneurs and business owners like never before.

It is no secret that there is political division on the issue of state support for rebuilding and recovery, but we are asking you to remember that these are real people that are working to overcome tremendous difficulties to support themselves, their families, and their communities. Rebuilding and recovery will take us all which is why we continue to advocate at every level of government.

Thank you and we look forward to working with you, your staff and the legislature to secure these investments. We would like to make ourselves available to best help inform your decisions. Please reach out to Kari Johnson, Senior Policy Advisor at the Metropolitan Consortium of Community Developers, at 612-387-6398 or [kjohnson@mccdmn.org](mailto:kjohnson@mccdmn.org), should you need any further information.

Sincerely,

Ackerberg, Jackie Knight  
Adenal Investments, Ade Alabi (*Impacted Business Owner*)  
African Development Center, Nasibu Sareva  
African Career, Education and Resource, Inc., Nelima Sitati Munene  
African Immigrants Lake Council, Kenneth Holt  
Annapolis Super USA 002, (*Impacted Business Owner*)  
Asian American Language Services, Snowdon Herr (*Impacted Business Owner*)  
Asian Economic Development Association, Va-Megn Thoj  
Association for Black Economic Power, Debra Hurston  
Big Bell Ice Cream Inc., James V. Freid (*Impacted Business Owner*)  
Black Women's Wealth Alliance, SBC, Kenya McKnight-Ahad  
Bole Ethiopian Cuisine, Solomon Hailie (*Impacted Business Owner*)  
Bougies LLC., (*Impacted Business Owner*)  
Care Community Services, Jelle Abdi (*Impacted Business Owner*)  
Century Plaza, (*Impacted Business Owner*)  
Cheng Heng, Kevin Lam (*Impacted Business Owner*)  
Chicago Furniture Warehouse, Inc., Faisal Demaag (*Impacted Business Owner*)  
Chicago Lake Family Dental, Dr. Ali Barbarawi (*Impacted Business Owner*)  
Comfort Keepers Twin Cities, Larvel Bunker (*Impacted Business Owner*)  
Community Works Consulting, Linda Soderstrom  
Davis Law Office, Davis Senseman (*Impacted Business Owner*)  
Developers of Color, Adrian Perryman  
Du Nord Craft Spirits, Chris Montana (*Impacted Business Owner*)  
Du Nord Foundation, Angelica Evens  
East Side Neighborhood Development Company, Anne DeJoy  
Express Paging Co./Express Cellular, Brian (*Impacted Business Owner*)  
Field of Dreams Empowerment Center  
G & L Furniture Inc., Abe Demmaj (*Impacted Business Owner*)  
Hawj United of Minnesota, Snowdon Herr

Holy Trinity Church, Pastor Ingrid Rasmussen  
Hope Community, Inc., Shannon Jones  
Hortensia PLLC, Miluska Novota (*Impacted Business Owner*)  
Ingebretsen's Nordic Marketplace, Julie Ingebretsen (*Impacted Business Owner*)  
Integrated Community Solutions, Inc., Sue Watlov Phillips  
K-Mama Sauce, LLC., KC Kye (*Impacted Business Owner*)  
KMS Construction, Ken McCraley (*Impacted Business Owner*)  
Lake Street Council, Allison Sharkey  
Latino Economic Development Center, Henry Jimenez  
Lilleknappen Inc., Anna Bloomstrand (*Impacted Business Owner*)  
Longfellow Business Association, Kim Jakus  
Loud Lou Limited, (*Impacted Business Owner*)  
Lowry Hill East Neighborhood Association, Paul Shanafelt  
MAC, Guinevere Baptise-Johns  
Main Street Alliance of Minnesota, Beth Fraser  
Metropolitan Consortium of Community Development, Elena Gaarder  
Metropolitan Economic Development Association, Alfredo Martel  
Metropolitan Interfaith Council on Affordable Housing(MICAH), Sue Watlov Phillips  
Midtown Global Market (*Impacted Business Owner*)  
Midway Chamber of Commerce, Chad Kulas  
Midway Tobacco Outlet Plus Inc., Khaled Aloul (*Impacted Business Owner*)  
Midway Rise UP, Isabel Chanslor  
Midwest Bus Services, Moha Shire (*Impacted Business Owner*)  
MN Ice, Robert H. (*Impacted Business Owner*)  
Neighborhood Development Center, Renay Dossman  
Neighbors United Funders Collaborative, Isabel Chanslor  
NEON, Warren McLean  
Nexus Community Partners, Repa Mekha  
Omari Brow Studio, Syreeta Seve (*Impacted Business Owner*)  
Peace Coffee, Lee Wallace (*Impacted Business Owner*)  
Peking Garden Chinese Restaurant, Kye Wi (*Impacted Business Owner*)  
Powderhorn Park Neighborhood Association, Tabitha Montgomery  
PRG, Inc., Kathy Wetzels-Mastel  
St. Paul Clinic, Ky Fang (*Impacted Business Owner*)  
Seward Redesign, Christopher Romano  
Springboard for the Arts (St. Paul & Fergus Falls), Laura Zabel  
The Black Hart of Saint Paul, Wes Burdine (*Impacted Business Owner*)  
The Finnish Bistro, Sandra Weise (*Impacted Business Owner*)  
The Milligan Studio, Dr. Nicole May Milligan (*Impacted Business Owner*)  
The Minnehaha Scoop, James V. Freid (*Impacted Business Owner*)  
The Right Way Outdoor Maintenance, Cornelius Walker (*Impacted Business Owner*)  
Thien's Cajun Boiling Seafood (*Impacted Business Owner*)  
Tina Do Inc., Tina Do (*Impacted Business Owner*)  
Udo's African Food Store LLC., Mike Udo (*Impacted Business Owner*)  
Urban Homeworks, AsaleSol Young  
Visionary Marketing Solutions, Inc., (*Impacted Business Owner*)

Wellington Management, David Wellington (*Impacted Business Owner*)  
West Broadway Business & Area Coalition, Felicia Perry  
WomenVenture, Erin Horne McKinney

cc: DEED Commissioner, Steve Grove  
Senate Capital Investments Chair, Senator Tom Bakk  
House Capital Investments Chair, Representative Fue Lee  
Senate Jobs Committee Chair, Senator Eric Pratt  
House Workforce & Business Committee Chair, Representative Mohamud Noor