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Legislative Update

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Hello from St. Paul!

We are three weeks into the legislative session, and one of the biggest items on the 2010 agenda, the bonding bill, was voted on this week. I have heard from many of you that borrowing this much money with such a large budget deficit is reckless and irresponsible. I agree. That is why I voted against it, but unfortunately the bill passed on Monday night and is moving on to House committee hearings.

The bill should be out of committee and head to the Governor at some point next week. Gov. Pawlenty has not said publicly what he will do, but most likely he will either veto the bill completely or use his ability to line-item veto the bill down to the amount he originally requested.



The House and Senate bills were both more than \$1 billion, but the Governor's was a more modest \$685 million. I think it is fiscally irresponsible to borrow another billion dollars before we fix the \$1.2 billion budget deficit. There are projects in this bill that Minnesota needs, but it is way too big. Would you buy a new television while your roof was collapsing? No - but this bill is just that.

I have enclosed a letter to the editor I wrote on the bill this week for your review.

On Thursday the House passed a bill that would extend GAMC benefits scheduled to end on April 1 until the end of the biennium. Gov. Pawlenty vetoed the bill. I will keep you updated as more occurs on this legislation.

Also, I've posted a new video on YouTube discussing my priorities this session. It is short if you would like to take a look:

www.youtube.com/taramack37a

Please continue to call and e-mail with your thoughts on the bonding bill or any other issues we face. You can also connect to me on Facebook.

Sincerely,

Tara Mack

REPRESENTING APPLE VALLEY
AND BURNSVILLE

Representative Tara Mack • District 37A

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

To the Editor,

On Monday night, the House passed a borrowing bill surpassing \$1 billion. This bill is poorly timed, too large and shows we need to review our priorities for the session.

I did not support this bill hoping legislative leaders will move a bill forward focuses more on funding vital state projects and sets responsible priorities for the economic future of our state.

Unfortunately, the bill that came before the legislature on Monday did not do this. Instead it borrows millions of dollars to fund volleyball courts, shade tree programs and other earmark projects without statewide significance and focuses on wants rather than needs.

Legislative leadership argues we need to pass this bill quickly to bring jobs to Minnesota now, but the majority of the projects funded in the bill (and the jobs created) will not begin until next year. This is not an acceptable solution for Minnesota. Rather than increase the state's debt we should pursue policies which enable private businesses to create long lasting, well paying jobs as soon as possible.

Another reason I voted against this bill is because our primary focus should be balancing the budget. We face a \$1.2 billion deficit and a projected \$5.4 billion shortfall in the next biennium. Borrowing another billion dollars before these problems are addressed is absolutely irresponsible.

We need to take steps to get our state back on solid fiscal ground. Minimizing our debt is one key towards accomplishing that goal. Minnesotans understand the need to cut back and live within their means during these tough economic times. It is time for the government to do the same thing. We cannot keep spending more than we have. Increasing our debt without thinking about the consequences is irresponsible. We are mortgaging our future and our children will have to pick up the tab.



For more information please visit my Web site:

www.house.mn/37A