



For Immediate Release

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Legislation calls for much-needed workforce housing in Greater Minnesota

ST. PAUL—A bill introduced today at the Minnesota Legislature addresses the chronic workforce housing shortage that has been stifling economic growth in many Greater Minnesota communities for several years.

S.F. 764, authored by Sen. Dan Sparks (DFL- Austin), and H.F. 749, authored by Rep. Rod Hamilton (R-Mountain Lake), uses grants and tax credits as an incentive to encourage developers and investors to build middle-income housing in Greater Minnesota. The proposal, which the Greater Minnesota Partnership (GMNP) helped develop, is designed to be a market-based solution to jumpstart development in communities that are ready and able to grow now.

“The Greater Minnesota Partnership thanks Sen. Sparks and Rep. Hamilton for developing a comprehensive solution that finally addresses the lack of investment in workforce housing in Greater Minnesota,” said Gary Evans, president of the GMNP. “We are excited that this issue is finally getting attention at the Legislature.”

Evans noted that employers in many rural communities struggle to attract and retain workers because of the lack of available housing. While affordable housing programs support residents with low-incomes, very little has been done to address the shortage of workforce housing.

“The lack of workforce housing is caused by a lack of private investment, rather than wages being too low,” he said.

Under the legislation, community members who donate toward a workforce housing project in Greater Minnesota would receive a 100 percent tax credit for doing so, while large investors would receive a 30 percent tax credit. The legislation also creates a workforce housing fund to award project grants to developers who build in Greater Minnesota.

“Some of our state’s large companies and small manufacturers simply can’t grow because of the severe lack of housing for rural Minnesota’s workers,” Evans said. “This bill provides a practical solution to the workforce housing problem that has plagued many of our communities far too long.”

The Greater Minnesota Partnership is a nonprofit corporation devoted to advocating for state economic development policies and resources that benefit Greater Minnesota. Its members consist

of businesses, chambers of commerce, economic development authorities, cities and nonprofit organizations from throughout Greater Minnesota. For more information about the GMNP, please visit gmnp.org.

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