

2019 CGMC LEGISLATIVE AWARDS

Honoring the legislators, city officials & community leaders who helped advance CGMC priorities

Legislator of Distinction Award

Awarded to legislators who played key roles in CGMC's policy success or advancing CGMC priorities during the preceding legislative session.

Legislator of Distinction - Tax Policy



Sen. Tom Bakk (DFL-Cook): Sen. Bakk is a long-time champion of LGA and rural communities. As the session progressed, the Senate minority leader played a pivotal role in working behind the scenes to make sure LGA remained a top priority. In addition, he offered an amendment during the Senate tax bill debate to increase funding for the LGA program.



Rep. Diane Loeffler (DFL-Minneapolis): As chair of the House Property and Local Tax Division, Rep. Loeffler led vital hearings on bills to boost funding for LGA and helped ensure that the LGA increase moved forward in the House. Currently serving her eighth term, Rep. Loeffler has long been a supporter of LGA and a good friend to local governments.



Rep. Paul Marquart (DFL-Dilworth): Rep. Marquart is an LGA all-star! Throughout his 10 terms in the House, he has consistently been a strong champion and leader on LGA. As chair of the House Tax Committee, he made restoring LGA back to its 2002 level a top priority this session. His leadership is a key reason this long-held CGMC goal was finally achieved this year.

Legislator of Distinction - Economic Development



Rep. Rob Ecklund (DFL-International Falls): As a member of the Jobs and Economic Development Finance Committee, Rep. Ecklund is a key leader for rural Minnesota. This session, he played an instrumental role in securing additional funding for the broadband grant program and was a strong supporter of LGA. He works hard behind the scenes to get things done for Greater Minnesota.



Sen. Karin Housley (R-St. Mary's Point): As chair of the Family Care & Aging Committee, Sen. Housley showed a deep commitment to ensuring that all communities have access to child care and the resources necessary to provide high-quality care. In particular, she was a strong advocate for the CGMC's proposal to provide funding to the Minnesota Initiative Foundations for provider training and business assistance.



Sen. Carla Nelson (R-Rochester): Sen. Nelson is a passionate leader in the areas of education and child care. This session, she was the chief author of the CGMC's proposal to provide funding to the Minnesota Initiative Foundations for child care provider business assistance and training. She was vital to working within her caucus to keep the proposal alive and ensuring that funding was included in the final jobs bill.



Sen. Eric Pratt (R-Prior Lake): As chair of the Senate Jobs Committee, Sen. Pratt has shown that he cares about economic development concerns and opportunities that impact the entire state. He was a strong supporter of many CGMC initiatives, including child care and the Greater Minnesota Business Development Infrastructure (BDPI) grant program, and helped make sure Greater Minnesota's needs were addressed in the jobs bill.

Legislator of Distinction - Environment



Sen. Gary Dahms (R-Redwood Falls): Sen. Dahms has long been a supporter of many Greater Minnesota initiatives. As chief Senate author of the CGMC's bill to fund the Public Facilities Authority (PFA) clean water infrastructure grant and loan programs, he has been a champion for helping rural communities address drinking water and wastewater challenges.



Rep. Mary Murphy (DFL-Hermantown): As chair of the House Capital Investment Committee, Rep. Murphy unveiled an ambitious \$1.5 billion bonding bill that addressed many critical needs for Greater Minnesota. In particular, her bill included significant funding for PFA clean water infrastructure programs and child care facilities grants, two of the CGMC's top priorities.



Rep. Jeanne Poppe (DFL-Austin): As chair of the House Ag Committee, Rep. Poppe is a strong leader on rural issues, especially the need for clean water infrastructure. This session, she was the chief House author of the CGMC's PFA clean water infrastructure funding bill. She worked tirelessly to get hearings on the bill and move the issue forward at the Capitol.



Sen. Carrie Ruud (R-Breezy Point): Sen. Ruud played a pivotal role in finding a solution to unlock critical PFA funding that had been in limbo despite being included in the 2018 bonding bill. As chair of the Environment and Natural Resources Policy Committee, she also helped pass legislation that requires independent peer review of water-quality regulations, which had long been a CGMC goal.

Legislator of Distinction - Transportation



Rep. Frank Hornstein (DFL-Minneapolis): As chair of the House Transportation Committee, Rep. Hornstein advanced a comprehensive transportation package that recognized the needs of the entire state. He showed great leadership and creativity in crafting a strong plan that addressed the CGMC's top transportation priorities by making significant investments in Corridors of Commerce and city streets.

First-Term Legislator of the Year



Rep. Jeff Brand (DFL-St. Peter): As a former St. Peter city councilor and past member of the CGMC board, Rep. Brand came to St. Paul with a keen understanding of the issues that are important to Greater Minnesota. Starting from Day 1, he sought out ways to help advance CGMC priorities and demonstrated his commitment by serving as chief author on critical bills related to LGA, child care and transportation.



Rep. Dave Lislegard (DFL-Aurora): As the former mayor of Aurora, Rep. Lislegard brought his experience in local government to the Legislature. An enthusiastic supporter of CGMC issues, he was the chief author of legislation to increase funding for LGA. He also served on the Tax Conference Committee, a rare opportunity for a freshman, where he continued to be a bulldog on LGA and local government issues.

Excellence in Teamwork Award

Awarded to the elected officials and city staff of CGMC member cities that worked together to promote CGMC goals and priorities over the preceding legislative session and/or an extended period of time.

City of Austin: Led by Mayor Tom Stiehm and City Administrator Craig Clark, the elected officials and staff for the City of Austin are always willing to go above and beyond to help advance the CGMC's goals. This session, they organized a press event on LGA that generated significant media coverage and they have also been extremely engaged in efforts to obtain vital funding for clean water infrastructure.

City of Marshall: In recent years, the City of Marshall has played an important role in the CGMC's clean water efforts. Led by City Administrator Sharon Hanson, Mayor Robert Byrnes and Utilities Manager Brad Roos, the city has been there at every step of the way — from reaching out to lawmakers, testifying at the Capitol, writing letters and more — to help make the case for the need for clean water infrastructure funding.

City of Winona: The City of Winona was instrumental in helping to promote the need for an LGA increase this year. In a true team effort, the city (led by Mayor Mark Peterson, City Manager Steve Sarvi, Economic Development Director Lucy McMartin and police & fire staff) put together a successful press conference at the Fire Hall to highlight the importance of LGA and its role in helping cities pay for critical public safety needs.

Excellence in Service Award

Awarded to local elected officials and city staff members who demonstrated knowledge, leadership and active participation in CGMC program areas over the preceding legislative session and/or an extended period of time.



Jennifer Bromeland (City Administrator, Eagle Lake): Bromeland is an up-and-coming leader for the CGMC. This session, she stepped up to testify at the Capitol regarding the child care crisis and its impact on rural communities. Her testimony helped legislators better understand the problem and how the CGMC's proposals could help address it.



Brad Hadrava (Council Member, Eveleth): This session, Hadrava provided key legislative testimony in support of the CGMC's bid to increase LGA funding. By sharing examples of how LGA impacts his community, Hadrava's testimony was vital in helping legislators understand the real-world importance of LGA.

Jackie Monahan-Junek (City Administrator, Eveleth): Monahan-Junek is always willing and able to rise to the occasion when called upon to help the CGMC. She jumped into action this winter to help strengthen the CGMC's case for an LGA increase by putting together detailed information about the uses and need for LGA in her city. Her information helped guide the LGA discussion at the Legislature.



Chuck Novak (Mayor, Ely): Mayor Novak has long been a tenacious advocate for CGMC priorities. A well-known presence around the Capitol, he is always willing and eager to see what he can do to help advance issues that are important to his community and other Greater Minnesota cities. In addition, he rarely misses a CGMC event!

Excellence in Service Award *(continued)*

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Ben Schierer (Mayor, Fergus Falls): An eager and enthusiastic advocate for Greater Minnesota and a recent addition to the CGMC board, Mayor Schierer has emerged as a go-to leader for the CGMC. He forged a strong relationship with the new Walz Administration and never hesitates to reach out to legislators and administration staff when called upon to speak up about CGMC priorities.



Rick Schultz (Mayor, St. Joseph): Mayor Schultz has long been an engaged member of the CGMC. He previously served on the CGMC board and continues to be active in the organization by advocating in support of key priorities like LGA, economic development and recruitment. This session, he was also particularly helpful in media efforts by participating in a meeting with the editorial board at the St. Cloud Times.

Jack Murray Award for Distinguished Rural Leadership

Awarded, upon retirement from public service, to local elected officials who have made special contributions to the CGMC over a multi-year career. The award is named after Jack Murray, former mayor of International Falls, who was instrumental in the CGMC's formation.



David Sturrock (former Marshall City Councilor): Sturrock was an active member of the CGMC board for several years. He was particularly engaged in transportation issues and often traveled to St. Paul to advocate on behalf of CGMC proposals. A thoughtful and conscientious leader, he always brought a unique perspective to policy discussions and finding ways to improve the CGMC.

Bob Filson Award for Distinguished Rural Leadership

Awarded, upon retirement from public service, to city staff members who have made special contributions to the CGMC over a multi-year career. The award is named after Bob Filson, former city manager of Worthington, who showed consistent and relentless dedication to the issues that mattered to the CGMC and its members.



Scott Hutchins (former Deputy City Manager, Moorhead): Hutchins was a long-time member of the CGMC board. He served as treasurer of the CGMC for 16 years, from 2002-2018, bringing a strong and consistent thread of continuity to the organization. A friendly and good-natured leader, he was well-known face around the Capitol and at CGMC events.

Friend of the CGMC Award

Awarded to individuals (not legislators or CGMC city officials) or organizations who have helped advance CGMC priorities and/or made important contributions to Greater Minnesota.



Nicole Griensewic Mickelson (Executive Director, Region Nine Development Commission): For the past two years, Griensewic Mickelson has served as president of the Greater Minnesota Partnership (GMNP), the CGMC's economic development-focused sister organization. A dedicated and savvy leader, she helped advance numerous initiatives on important issues like child care, job training and broadband.

Friend of the CGMC Award *(continued)*

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Nancy Jost (Director of Early Childhood, West Central Initiative): CGMC staff have Jost's number on speed dial! As the CGMC continues to become more involved in exploring solutions to the child care crisis, she has been an invaluable source of knowledge and information. She further demonstrated her expertise this session by testifying at the Capitol in support of CGMC's child care proposals.



Scott Marquardt (Vice President, Southwest Minnesota Initiative Foundation): Marquardt is a tireless champion when it comes to seeking solutions to Greater Minnesota's child care crisis. This session, he was tremendously helpful in advancing CGMC's child care proposals by testifying at the Legislature and attending countless meetings where he conveyed need for child care from an economic development standpoint.

Minnesota Chamber of Commerce: This session, the Chamber was a powerful ally on the CGMC's child care initiatives. Chamber staff, particularly Education & Workforce Development Director Stacey Stout, were quick to voice their support for CGMC proposals and defended them from detractors. The Chamber's support gave an added layer of credibility and credence to the CGMC's plans.

President's Award



Ron Johnson (Council Member, Bemidji): Johnson's commitment to the CGMC and Greater Minnesota is remarkable; he has missed only two CGMC events in nearly 20 years! As president, he brought a wealth of knowledge and experience to the role. Always willing to lend a hand and jump to the occasion, his steady guidance was key to helping advance CGMC priorities on LGA, transportation and other important issues.

Tim Flaherty Legacy Award

The Legacy Award is awarded, upon retirement, to legislators or other advocates who have demonstrated unfailing commitment and made extraordinary contributions to Greater Minnesota during their careers. This year, the award is being renamed the "Tim Flaherty Legacy Award."



Tim Flaherty (former CGMC Executive Director): The founder of Flaherty & Hood and former CGMC executive director, Flaherty retired this year after a distinguished career that was heavily devoted to advocating for the needs of Greater Minnesota cities. A well-known and respected fixture at the Capitol and in rural communities across the state, he has long been one of the most ardent and vocal advocates for the LGA and other Greater Minnesota priorities.

Tim began representing the CGMC at the Capitol in 1984. Since then, the coalition's membership has grown from 20 cities to its current 97 members, and it has developed into a major player in shaping the state's legislative policies and funding priorities.