COALITION OF GREATER MN CITIES

DEDICATED TO A STRONG GREATER MINNESOTA

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CGMC calls for a special session

Below is a statement from CGMC President and Luverne Mayor Patrick Baustian on the end of the 2022 legislative session and the possible upcoming special session:

ST. PAUL – "As the legislative session ends, the Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities is extremely disappointed the legislature failed to address Greater Minnesota needs. Our cities are still reeling from hardships created and exacerbated by the pandemic and the staggering increase in inflation. We urge leadership to agree to a special session and pass legislation that provides meaningful investments in our communities this year.

"While we were pleased to see the Tax Conference Committee come to an agreement that included a $30 million increase to the Local Government Aid program, we are frustrated it did not make it to the floor. The LGA appropriation has not kept up with city needs by any measure, and recent inflation makes it more difficult every day for cities to provide the public safety, core infrastructure, libraries, parks and recreation, and other services our residents and businesses rely on without imposing significant property tax increases or services cuts. Cities cannot wait another year to receive more LGA.

"Given all the critical infrastructure needs across the state, it would be an absolute failure if the legislature were not to pass a bonding bill. Unless the leaders agree to a special session, millions of dollars' worth of Greater Minnesota projects will not receive the funding they desperately need. Water and wastewater facilities across the state are in dire need of updates due to aging infrastructure. Without additional funding through the bonding bill, our cities will have to drastically raise their water rates for residents and businesses to pay for these costly upgrades. Cities simply cannot afford to wait any longer for state funding to help meet these needs.

"It is beyond frustrating the legislature was unable to pass a bonding bill or the agreed upon tax bill during the 2022 legislative session but agreeing to a special session will provide a second chance for leadership to do right by Minnesotans. The current $9.3 billion budget surplus and the infusion of federal funding have presented a-once-in a lifetime opportunity. It would be a great shame if partisan disagreements stopped Greater Minnesota's needs from being met."

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The Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities is a nonprofit, nonpartisan advocacy organization that represents cities outside of the Twin Cities metropolitan area. The Coalition educates legislators about issues important to Greater Minnesota. Visit the CGMC online at greatermncities.org and follow us on Twitter @greatermncities.