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Contact: Julie Liew
651-259-1917

Business and community leaders: 2015 session provides a unique opportunity to deliver for Greater Minnesota

ST. PAUL—A group of more than 75 businesses, local governments, higher education institutions, chambers of commerce and economic development organizations is calling on Governor Dayton and the Minnesota Legislature to take action on a number of issues that are critical to economic development in Greater Minnesota.

At a meeting today, the Greater Minnesota Partnership (GMNP) Board of Directors set the organization's 2015 legislative priorities aimed at improving job growth and fostering economic development in Greater Minnesota. The GMNP's top initiatives for the upcoming session include \$200 million for broadband expansion, \$20 million for a flexible, employer-driven job training program and \$100 million to address the current lack of workforce housing that plagues many Greater Minnesota communities.

“In order to close the growing economic gap between the rural and metro parts of the state, Greater Minnesota businesses need high-speed broadband, properly trained workers and a place for them to live,” said GMNP President Gary Evans. “State funding for these initiatives will bring job growth to Greater Minnesota and build a stronger economy for our entire state.”

The GMNP Board, which consists of economic development professionals and business leaders from across the state, also emphasized the need for a renewed focus on Greater Minnesota.

“We hope and expect the newly elected legislators—especially those from Greater Minnesota—to show leadership on these issues that are so important to our communities,” Evans said. “We are calling on the Governor and legislators from both parties to make Greater Minnesota economic development a priority this session.”

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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