

## Greater Minnesota Public Television Stations' Legislative Proposal

### February 2026

The purpose of this proposal is to make sure the PBS Stations serving Greater Minnesota continue to stay relevant and viable for the communities they serve. The ability to continue this mission has been significantly impacted as a result of the federal elimination of all funding grants for public television. When Congress eliminated CPB funding last fall, Minnesota's public television stations lost nearly \$9 million. Greater Minnesota stations suffered the largest percentage cuts, as much as 30% to 40% of their operating funds previously authorized by Congress, just as the fiscal year began. These funds provided critical operating support, and were used to acquire national programs, develop educational materials, create and distribute local news and other programs, and to cover day-to-day operating expenditures

The goal of every Minnesota public television station is to produce and distribute programming by, for, and about the communities we serve. Stations provide "cradle to grave" programs that educate, enlighten, inform and help make better citizens.

Minnesota's public television stations are currently undergoing the most significant transformation in their 60 plus-year history. All stations have reduced expenses, cut staff, and eliminated programs. We are moving toward a more agile, collaborative, and sustainable business model designed to serve our state for decades to come.

This transition will take time, and stations cannot do it alone. The State of Minnesota has been an important partner with public television for decades, investing millions in infrastructure to help provide all Minnesota with life-long learning, local programs, and educational content for children. Stations now need one-time transitional funding to help us build a new system for Greater Minnesota.

To successfully complete this pivot to new business models to continue to service their local communities with their unique services, Greater Minnesota stations have identified a one-time funding gap for Fiscal Year 2027. This investment is not a permanent subsidy; rather, it is the "transitional bridge" required to explore and where practical create new organizational structures, while keeping our vital services active, and maintaining local identity.

The stations of Greater Minnesota are requesting a total of \$1,925,000. This funding allows our coalition to:

1. Retain Local Identity: Keep local stations in their communities, producing local programs.
2. Fund Transition Costs: Each station receiving funds under this initiative will be examining ways in which to reengineer their business models so they can integrate

shared service frameworks among other regional stations. (Examples include fundraising, accounting and legal functions, graphic arts, program development etc).

3. Maintain Service Continuity: Ensure that while we reorganize, there is no lapse in local news, emergency messaging, or the high-quality educational programming that Minnesota families rely on.
4. Bridge to New Revenue: Explore possible collaborations that will support the strategic evolution of regional public media fundraising.

The specific request for each station is as follows:

<u>Station</u>	<u>Legislative Request</u>	<u>Amount eliminated by CPB</u>
Pioneer PBS	\$ 350,000	\$1,081,800
Lakeland PBS	\$ 475,000	\$947,307
KSMQ	\$ 650,000	\$883,133
PBS North	\$ 250,000	\$1,138,604
Prairie Public	\$ 200,000	\$601,051

As a final reminder, these funds will not fully replace the federal funds that stations lost in 2025. The federal rescission decision forced Minnesota stations to lay off staff, cut expenses wherever possible, and draw on emergency reserves simply to remain operational and continue serving their local communities. Our immediate priority is to get through the next fiscal year. We remain confident that each station can preserve its unique identity, which is critical to delivering the highest quality of service to Minnesotans. However, we need your help this year to buy us time to explore and possibly develop a new, comprehensive regional structure that will reduce long-term costs while fostering individual station identity.

For further information Contact:

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