



April 17, 2026

Minnesota House of Representatives, Capital Investment Committee  
Co-Chairs Lee and Franson and Members of the House Capital Investment Committee

Dear Co-Chairs and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for HF 4617, the Sears Redevelopment funding request.

As the Saint Paul City Councilmember representing the district where the site is located, I have witnessed the challenges facing this long-vacant site, even before my tenure as a councilmember. For nearly a decade, this prominent parcel adjacent to the State Capitol has remained underutilized due to significant infrastructure barriers that have prevented redevelopment.

The request before you is an investment in essential, publicly owned systems, including sewer, water, and stormwater infrastructure. These non-revenue-generating systems are prerequisites for any development and cannot be financed solely by the private market.

This investment will unlock substantial private development, grow the local and state tax base, and generate both construction and long-term employment opportunities. Because the site sits within the Capitol Area and downtown, we have a great opportunity to invest in adding vitality and spurring more growth.

This project strategic public infrastructure to position the district for long-term economic growth, rather than a request to fund private development. I have worked with Rondo Community Land Trust, whose mission to create economic and housing opportunities meets current needs of Saint Paul residents.

Furthermore, as a descendant of the historic Rondo community, I recognize the site's deep significance. This effort is an opportunity to move forward with a plan grounded in economic reality and community responsibility.

I respectfully urge your support for HF 4617. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Anika Bowie, Councilmember  
Ward 1, City of Saint Paul