

TO: Senator Bobby Joe Champion, Chair, Jobs & Economic Development
Senator Jen McEwen, Chair, Labor & Industry
Senator Zaynab Mohamed, Vice Chair, Jobs & Economic Development
Senator Grant Hauschild, Vice Chair, Labor & Industry
Senator Heather Gustafson, Vice Chair, Education & Finance
Representative Hodan Hassan, Chair, Economic Development
Representative Jay Xiong, Chair, Workforce Development Finance & Policy
Representative Mike Nelson, Chair, Labor & Industry
Representative Kaela Berg, Chair, Labor and Industry Finance and Policy
Representative Liz Olson, Chair, Ways & Means

November 15, 2022

Dear Members of the Omnibus Jobs and Labor Conference Committee

Thank you for investing in the aspirations of our community. As the CEO of NEOO Partners, I am writing to express our appreciation for your leadership in bringing forth the necessary funds for community in HF 3028 and SF 3035.

NEOO Partners has been involved in the tactical rebuilding efforts along the Lake Street Corridor and University Ave since 2020. We have seen first hand the misery and pain of our communities greatest champions. Many businesses have been unable to open since 2020 and children who were 15 years old with college aspirations have had their dreams slashed as their family's business remain shuttered. Because of your leadership, many who have endured great hardship will be able to turn the page on a grave chapter in our history.

NEOO, with a host of partners across the state; together, have done all in our power to propel our communities forward from devastation. The ecosystems have been built, the deep networks of support are available, and the aspirations of our communities greatest problem solvers are more fervent than before. Now is the time for your collective leadership to ensure that access to capital, access to technical assistance, and access to the comprehensive resources are no longer a barrier.

The principal problem solvers in our community are back, and ready to transform our state.

As the bill advances through session, we strongly urge members of the legislature to consider the following modifications that will aid in the scalable rebuilding efforts.

- Increase the \$500,000 funding cap to \$2M given the size and complexity of the rebuilding efforts by our most vulnerable small business populations.
- Increase the revenue cap for grant funding to include the burgeoning businesses in community at scale
- Provide direct funding to 38th/Chicago intersection
- Provide forgivable loan funds to rebuilding projects along corridors decimated by civil unrest with a priority given to emerging developers and small business owner occupied real estate

We thank you for your commitment and sacrifice of leadership to the people of Minnesota and deeply believe now is the time to invest our record surplus into the major employers of the future, and a stronger community fabric that makes all of Minnesota better.

In Power, Love and Sound Mind,

J' Angelos Suenkeson