

**Erin Murphy**  
State Representative

District 64A  
Ramsey County



# Minnesota House of Representatives

May 23, 2016

Governor Mark Dayton  
116 Veterans Service Building  
20 W 12<sup>th</sup> Street  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Governor Dayton,

As you are aware, we had an unsuccessful ending to the 2016 Legislature early this morning. It is why I am writing to you so quickly. For the Minnesotans who expect us to competently serve, the work of this session is incomplete. I am not going to spend time casting blame about the session end, though I am clear about the contributors to it. Instead, I want to share with you what I hope is on the agenda for consideration if there is a special session.

We need to pass a bonding bill. I voted no on the poorly timed proposal last night because it did not include transit. The need for infrastructure investment as well as investment in roads, bridges, and transit across the state is well known and Minnesotans expected that we accomplish that work this session. It is what we said we would do.

The politics of geography and ideology have impaired a successful negotiation. But the need across the state is significant and clear. I hope that you will consider bridging that political divide to bring to resolution a package that could be adopted in a special session.

I urge you to choose this path and ask you to consider two more requests.

We have been working together since 2014 to establish PreK and make it available to every four year old in Minnesota. This year, I introduced a comprehensive bill, called MinneK. I believe it is important to set a strong foundation on which we can build. I believe the Senate's pilot proposal was a start but not adequate in size and it lacked curriculum content that would better define our outcome of high quality, play based learning. I am fully aware of my republican colleagues strong opposition to school based PreK. I was hopeful but realistic about our chances to make progress on this issue this session, despite your strong backing and the support of Minnesotans.

The language in the supplemental budget heading to your desk is fatally flawed as it does not require licensed teachers. Licensed teachers are a key factor in high quality PreK and, for our



kids, we cannot establish PreK without them. Without licensed teachers, we cannot call this PreK.

I am a licensed professional, a registered nurse. My license communicates to the public that I meet the standards to care for sick, that I am educated and prepared to fulfill that awesome responsibility. My license also means I am accountable for what I do. It is a critical to professional nursing and it also critical to professional education. Our four year olds deserve that quality. It must be included in the establishment of PreK, work that you, your Administration, Senator Sieben and I have shared together. I ask that if you consider a special session that we engage together and insist on the inclusion of licensed teachers.

Finally, I ask that you consider the elimination of the tax break for Big Tobacco in the tax bill. It is inconceivable to me that we would reward cigarette producers given what we know about their proclivity to entice young people to use their products. There are countless better purposes in Minnesota for tax dollars, purposes that will build our future. That tax break represents the worst of what has been an ugly legislative session.

I write with urgency and hope. I am committed to Minnesota's future and will work with you to build it.

Mighty together,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Erin Murphy', with a stylized, cursive script.

Erin Murphy  
State Representative