



Invest in Minnesota Talking Points

In the face of Minnesota's current budget deficit, we must raise revenues in order to ensure adequate funding for the programs and services important to our community. Legislators need to hear from constituents who will stand behind fair revenue-raising as part of the solution.

Invest in Minnesota unites Minnesota's faith communities, labor and nonprofit organizations around raising revenue fairly.

The message to legislators can simple:

- **Tell your story** by sharing your personal experiences or organization's perspective on the importance of programs and services in need of adequate funding. If you have experienced budget cuts as a result of lack of state revenue, explain the impact at a personal and local level.
- **State your support for raising revenues** as a significant part of resolving the state's budget deficit.
- **Stress that the overall revenue package must be raised fairly.**
 - An increase to the state's income tax so that the wealthiest pay their fair share.
 - Targeted tax credits for low- and moderate-income Minnesotans should be maintained and expanded.

Some facts to strengthen the argument:

- Minnesota is a great state and we want to keep it that way. Confronted with budget deficits starting in 2002, the legislature has enacted cuts causing Minnesota to lose ground compared to other states.
- Minnesota must take a balanced approach to solving the state's \$1.2 billion budget deficit in 2010. Given the magnitude of the problem, no options should be taken off the table. Balancing solely through spending cuts takes dollars out Minnesota's economy.
- Minnesota's tax system asks low- and middle-income Minnesotans to pay more than their fair share. The Department of Revenue reports that those making more than \$448,000 annually pay 8.9% of their incomes in state and local taxes while those making between \$31,000 and \$67,000 pay over 12%.
- The majority of surveyed Minnesotans support a balanced approach to addressing budget shortfalls that includes raising taxes in order to avoid painful cuts to services for the elderly and people with disabilities, education, health care or job training.
- History shows that when we invest in Minnesota, we can build a stronger state. There has not been a correlation between higher taxes and poor economic performance. Minnesota's economy outperformed the nation through the 1980s and 1990s, when our taxes were higher.

For more information and resources visit the Invest in Minnesota website at www.investinmn.org or contact Leah Gardner at 651-757-3063 or leah@mncn.org.