



MAKING YOUR CASE FOR REVENUES

Whether you're talking to your legislator or writing a letter-to-the-editor, it is important to create a narrative that includes framing your message, telling a compelling story, and providing a solution.

FRAMING YOUR MESSAGE:

Start with what we all know—the impact of the national economic recession has hit our state very hard. Yet, many of the proposals for addressing the growing gap between public needs and the state's ability to meet them would reduce opportunity, increase economic insecurity and stall the recovery.

State one of the following problems with a cuts-only approach. It would mean:

- **Cutting investments** like education, health care, public safety, infrastructure and transportation would severely undermine the foundations of Minnesota's future prosperity. This approach leaves behind families and individuals who have been hurt by the recession, and it will keep Minnesota businesses from growing.
- **Leaving in place a tax system in which the wealthiest pay less than working families is not only unfair, it would cripple the recovery.** We need an approach that ensures that everyone is paying their fair share.
- **Drastic reductions in critical services** needed most by families struggling in tough economic times would only make matters worse. The budget should not be balanced on the backs of the middle class or those hit hardest by the economic crisis – seniors, children, people with disabilities, the unemployed and low-income families.
- **More lost jobs** would damage the state's economy and further threaten recovery in Minnesota by reducing income to local businesses. Education, health care, and vital services preserve jobs.

TELLING YOUR STORY:

We all know it's about more than raising revenues, it's about minimizing real cuts and real pain for real people. That's why your story is so critical in making the case for a balanced approach.

- **Keep it simple.** Practice being able to paint a picture of your issue in a way that's easy to understand and remember. Keep it to a couple sentences.
- **Make it personal.** Whether you use your personal story or a compelling example of someone receiving a service, pick a specific story that you think illustrates the impact of a cut or the need to maintain adequate funding.
- **Explain and if possible quantify the benefit of the services you want to see adequately funded.** For example, the average cost to treat a youth in the Youth Intervention Program is \$205 compared to \$40,200 a year to hold a youth in a juvenile correction facility. Make the connection to how public funds are critical to your work and the lives of those you serve or represent.

Take the time you need to prepare a polished, compelling story—it's the most important part of making your case for revenues raised fairly.

PROVIDING A SOLUTION:

Take a stand for a better choice: a balanced approach that includes revenue. In tough times, this approach strengthens the middle class by protecting investments in our future prosperity, provides opportunities for people to succeed, and helps families struggling with economic insecurity.

Invest in Minnesota is a coalition of faith, labor and nonprofit organizations united to invest in Minnesota's future. For more information, visit www.investinmn.org or contact Leah Gardner at 651-757-3063 or leah@mncn.org.