

# INTERNATIONAL UNION OF OPERATING ENGINEERS

LOCAL NO. 49, 49A, 49B, 49C, 49D, 49E, 49L  
MINNESOTA • NORTH DAKOTA • SOUTH DAKOTA

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June 16, 2020

Dear Governor Walz, Majority Leader Gazelka, Speaker Hortman, Minority Leader Kent, and Minority Leader Daudt:

I write today to express my expectation that all of you find a deal on a robust, job-creating bonding bill in this special session that is focused on road and bridge funding, wastewater treatment facilities, rebuilding damaged areas of Minneapolis and St. Paul, and other building construction projects.

I was deeply disappointed that a bonding bill wasn't passed during the regular session, despite broad agreement on the spending target. Sadly, the bill and resulting jobs were victim of end-of-session political posturing and gamesmanship which all of you participated in.

Another aspect of this unwise political posturing is tying support for a bonding bill to other legislative initiatives. Linking support for a bonding bill to other legislative agenda items greatly diminishes the odds of passing a bonding bill and sends a message to our members that you see a critical jobs bill as little more than a bargaining chip to be spent in pursuit of other legislative initiatives.

We are calling on all of you to reject mutually and publicly linking a bonding bill to any other issues or legislation and to treat a special session bonding bill as a separate, stand-alone item.

As you well know, our economy is in tatters and the pipeline for future construction projects is in question, making this bonding bill a crucial economic lifeline for thousands of construction workers and their employer contractors. For these skilled construction professionals, state-funded capital investment projects could be one of the only source of work across this state next year and thus the only means of keeping them employed, financially secure, and not reliant on state unemployment insurance benefits.

Our state and nation face unprecedented social and economic challenges that we will be dealing with for the foreseeable future. As leaders, you have the opportunity to make meaningful progress to address these issues. A bonding bill that builds infrastructure and creates quality jobs in every corner of this state is a great place to start. I can tell you unequivocally, our more than 14,000 members do not want to hear your excuses, they do not care whose fault it is, or where you try to place the political blame for inaction.

Everyday on our jobsites members are judged on production. Our members don't get to point the finger and make excuses if a job doesn't get done. If we do our jobs, we keep our jobs. If we

don't, we get let go. That's the reality for working class Minnesotan's. It is about time our elected leaders were held to the same standards.

Because this legislation is so important to workers, we will be "scoring" bonding bill votes this special session and informing our members regarding their legislator's vote(s). But more importantly, we will be talking to our members about what does or doesn't get done, and we will be holding all elected officials equally accountable for inaction.

We ask that you put the politics aside. Minnesota needs you to come together, start talking to each other, and find a deal to create jobs right now.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. George', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Jason George  
Business Manager/Financial Secretary  
International Union of Operating Engineers  
Local49

CC: Members of the Minnesota Senate (via email)

CC: Members of the Minnesota House of Representatives (via email)