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Members and associates,

Sen. Roger Chamberlain, chair of the Senate Taxes Committee, joined Senate Republicans on Thursday to provide an overview of their tax reform proposals. His message was that Minnesota has helped billionaires long enough, now it's time to help Main Street. That sounded like a call to action on our tax relief bill. No one is paying more in taxes to benefit billionaires than charitable gaming organizations. And no one puts more effort into building strong communities – helping the Main Streets throughout the state – than our community charities.

Yet, when the Senate Republicans unveiled their proposal Thursday, tax relief for charitable gaming was ignored. This in spite of the fact that 200 of our organizations are now paying more to the state than they have for their communities and missions. With the continued growth that we are experiencing (thanks to our supporters) that number will increase to 300 in fiscal year 2017. It is my contention that these groups will eventually call it quits and turn in their license. Members will not support paying more to the state than their charity gets forever.

I want to relate a story from last summer, because it directly relates to the billionaires Sen. Chamberlain talked about. I e-mailed a senior executive of the Minnesota Vikings to ask him to sit down with me over a cup of coffee, taking at most fifteen minutes of his time. The point I wanted to make to him was that the stadium was built and nobody could take that away, but our charities were

being hurt by the 2012 legislation.

I wanted to impress on the Vikings' leadership that a positive word from the Vikings to the Governor or the Legislature would go a long way in helping us to affect relief for our charities. I never did hear back from the executive, but I did hear from one of the team's army of lobbyists. I was told that Mr. Executive was a very busy man and that I should stop trying to contact him. Heaven forbid that the beneficiary of a half billion dollar gift from the state should make time to talk to the folks that are stuck with paying the tab.

I couldn't help but think of my experience when I saw in Sid Hartman's Sunday column that the governor was bragging about the success of the stadium. Hartman quoted the governor as saying, "The electronic pulltabs have picked up a bit and there's enough money there to pay off the debt and it's going well."

It might be going well for the Vikings, the governor and the other politicians who found cover in sending the bill for the stadium to community charities. There is currently nothing people about the so called people's stadium. It is a stadium built with our tax dollars for billionaires. As we are finding out it is a stadium rife with cronyism, nepotism and who knows what else. We were the means to an end and that is all we were. Today, the Vikings ignore us and the governor brags about the success of the stadium – success that is carried on **OUR** backs.

NOBODY, but **NOBODY** should have to pay more to the state/Vikings than they have for their own use, I don't care whether you are for profit or non-profit. Can you imagine what the Vikings would say or do if they were faced with our tax structure? **WILL WE EVER TELL OUR LEGISLATORS THAT ENOUGH IS ENOUGH?**

The unmitigated gall of the NFL and the Vikings knows no bounds as they are back at the public trough working the Legislature for tax breaks of up to \$1.6 million on the upcoming Super Bowl. [Here is the link to the bill.](#) **WILL WE EVER TELL OUR LEGISLATORS THAT ENOUGH IS ENOUGH?**

Apparently the NFL having revenue of \$13 billion in 2016 is not sufficient for them. [See the link to a Forbes magazine article.](#) **WILL WE EVER TELL OUR LEGISLATORS THAT ENOUGH IS ENOUGH?**

You can tell me that you have no dog in this fight, but you are wrong. Fire, Police, Church, Veteran, Fraternal, Community, Civic, Athletic and Youth groups are all being hurt by the current tax structure. I have many groups telling me that they will turn in their license if there is no relief this year or at the very least put machines in their sites, doing away with all of their employees. As a group we pay roughly \$60 million in wages each year to our employees. I wonder how many other groups in the state pay that much in wages annually? What would be the cost to the state if all of our sites became machine sites? I cannot begin to calculate that cost, but the cost to the state would seem to be catastrophic in terms of lost income taxes coupled with unemployment benefits that will need to be paid out.

To the Dayton administration this seems to be a closed issue. There currently is no middle ground, no recognition of our problem, no voice of reason willing to listen or talk to us. We know that we will always pay more in state tax than the average company or individual. We believe that there are ways to pay for the stadium and get us relief. Our idea is to take our first \$30 million in taxes and pay for the annual stadium bonds. This fiscal year we will have paid in roughly \$60 million. After letting us deduct our donations anything over the \$30 million will go into the general fund. This would pay for the stadium and it would actually be the people's stadium, something that it is not today. We would still be sending in over the \$30 million annually, sending in roughly an additional \$15 million into the general fund as well if we were allowed to deduct our donations.

What has become most disappointing to me is that we have never framed our issue as a win-lose situation for us, the state or the Vikings, but that is how it is being framed by the other two. We are the only ones saying that there is enough money to take care of all three of our issues. To think that this is coming down to 1200 philanthropic organizations spread across an entire state that do more good than we can ever list, against the Dayton administration and a for profit owned by billionaires boggles my mind. We are folks that are all about win-win situations. You cannot tell me that we, the state and the Vikings cannot come up with a solution that benefits us all, but that is the story the other two groups are sticking to.

Folks, the rubber is hitting the road. If you are ok with the state getting more of

your money than you get to use for your communities and missions, so be it. If you are ok with Department of Revenue making it seem like we are trying to break the stadium bank with inflated estimates, so be it. If you are ok with billionaires getting tax relief and not your charity, so be it. If you think as I do that this is an outrage, you need to act and act NOW. Let your Legislators know that you are not going to sit by and let another year go by without change to our current onerous tax structure. Find out who represents you [here](#). If you have no indignation about our current tax structure and are not willing to speak up you will most likely forever have to hold your peace. I understand that you believe in government but that you have lost faith in government with the seemingly lack of interest in your concerns/issues/plight. This is an issue of fairness that needs to be addressed and addressed NOW. Without you we will not succeed. It is as simple and as complicated as that.

Regards,

Al Lund

Executive Director

Allied Charities of Minnesota (ACM)

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WE NEED YOUR HELP!

Bipartisan members of both the House and the Senate have voiced support for the Community Vitality Investment Act, but they need to hear from YOU. Here are three ways you can support tax relief for local charities:

1. **CONTACT YOUR LEGISLATORS** -- Find out who represents you and how to contact them [here](#). If you're not sure what to say, read some tips on contacting your legislators [here](#).
2. **LINK TO US ON YOUR WEBSITE** -- Ask your web manager to include a link to the Community Vitality Investment Act page on the ACM website. Your members will have easy access to the latest news on the bill. Here's the link: www.alliedcharitiesmn.org/Community-Vitality-Investment-Act
3. **FOLLOW US!** -- Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) and make sure to

share our posts with your networks! Use #CVIA to make sure we see your posts.

SAVE THE DATE

MARCH 20, 2017

ACM will be holding our 2nd legislative reception for all State Representatives and Senators on Monday evening March 20 from 5 to 7:30 p.m. The event will be held at the Best Western Plus Capitol Ridge (Formerly the Kelly Inn, within walking distance of the capitol) 161 St. Anthony Ave. St. Paul, MN 55103. Please put this on your calendar. The idea is to share with our elected officials what we do in our communities and how current law hampers our ability to do more. Download an invitation [here](#) and keep watching the ACM website www.alliedcharitiesmn.org for details as they become available.



CONTACT YOUR LEGISLATOR!

Your voice matters--find out who represents you [here](#) and ask them to support the Community Vitality Investment Act.

REMINDER:

Please add alliedcharitiesmn@gmail.com to your contact list so we don't get caught in your spam folder!



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