

The Ranger

June 18, 2025

Standing Together: A Message from Commissioner Ida Rukavina and Senator Robert Farnsworth

This edition of *The Ranger* comes during a time of deep sorrow for Minnesota. The tragic and senseless deaths of House Speaker Emerita Melissa Hortman and her husband, Mark Hortman, and the serious injuries sustained by Senator John Hoffman and his wife, Yvette, have shaken communities across our state.

At Iron Range Resources & Rehabilitation (IRRR), our mission is to strengthen northeastern Minnesota through investments in infrastructure, business and workforce development. But we know that strong, healthy communities are built on more than economic growth — they begin with people. They are sustained by care, connection and our shared commitment to one another's well-being.

Speaker Emerita Hortman was a dedicated public servant whose decades of leadership will continue to shape Minnesota's future for years to come. She was respected for her thoughtful approach, steady leadership and deep commitment to serving the people of Minnesota.

Speaker Emerita Hortman and Senator Hoffman have been long-standing advocates for Minnesota families — and true friends of the Iron Range. Their leadership and support have helped advance the work we do every day to strengthen our communities and economy.

We extend our heartfelt condolences to Sophie and Colin Hortman, their family and all who mourn. We hold them in our thoughts as they begin the difficult journey of healing. We also wish Senator Hoffman and his wife, Yvette, a full and swift recovery in the days ahead.

We offer our sincere gratitude to law enforcement, first responders and emergency personnel whose quick actions and service in the face of tragedy embody the very best of our communities.

There is no room for political violence in Minnesota or anywhere else in America. We must reject hate in all its forms and continue working toward a future rooted in respect, safety and shared humanity.

Circumstances such as this are a stark reminder of the importance of caring for ourselves and for one another. If you or someone you know is struggling, please know that help is available:

- **988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline** – Call or text 988 for free, confidential support 24/7
- **Crisis Text Line** – Text “MN” to 741741
- **Minnesota Department of Health Mobile Crisis Resources** – <https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/opioids/prevention/mobilecrisis.html>
- **NAMI Minnesota Resources and Services** – <https://namimn.org/support/resources/>
- **FastTrackerMN Mental Health and Substance Use Services Finder** – <https://www.fasttrackermn.org/>

We remain committed to building a stronger, more resilient Minnesota — one that grows not only through economic investment, but also through compassion, resilience and our shared values as neighbors.

Sincerely,



Commissioner Ida Rukavina



Senator Robert Farnsworth, IRRR Board Chair

Northland Learning Center breaks ground on new school building

Officials gathered on June 16 to celebrate the groundbreaking of Northland Learning Center’s new single-story, 32,000-square-foot school building. The new \$17.5 million facility, located east of Mountain Iron City Hall, will include seven elementary classrooms, five high school classrooms and four Alternative Learning Center classrooms. It will serve about 100 students in a setting IV environment — a separate site for students with disabilities such as emotional or behavioral disorders, autism spectrum disorders or developmental delays.



Iron Range Resources & Rehabilitation supported the project with a total of \$12.68 million, including \$10.6 million in Educational Facilities Revenue Bonds and \$2.08 million in legislatively approved revenue bond proceeds.* Commissioner Ida Rukavina spoke at the event, saying, “Our agency was proud to support this project. The innovative work behind it will make our students, families, region and economy stronger. It will help us all be better prepared for the future.”