



Northern Wholesale Millwork
DBA: The Tongue & Groove Store
5718 Miller Trunk Hwy
Duluth, MN 55811

March 20, 2023

State Senator Aric Putnam
95 University Avenue West
Minnesota Senate Building Room 3215
St. Paul, MN 55155

RE: Growth Acceleration Program

Dear Senator Putnam:

I am writing this letter urging the legislature to fully support Enterprise Minnesota's funding request in SF 2665. The funding for this program supports small manufacturers, like myself, throughout the state. The Tongue & Groove Store was formed in 2009 in Duluth, MN during the midst of the Great Recession. GAP monies granted to our company for strategic planning and value stream mapping allowed us to grow and expand our business while maximizing flow throughout the plant. As I write this letter today, we are in the finishing stages of a multi-faceted expansion due to our explosive growth. We currently employ 22 people and are looking to hire an additional 5-7 people in 2023. Much of our success to date can be attributed to the support we received through GAP funding.

GAP has helped hundreds of Minnesota based manufacturers receive a minimum \$25 return for every \$1 spent of GAP. The program offers a matching grant up to \$25,000 per year to implement business improvements. There are many other manufacturers across the state looking to make investments in their people and processes but need additional support to get them across the finish line. The GAP program does precisely just that, making growth possible.

Minnesota has a rich manufacturing history, but today's economic climate presents uncertainty and new challenges that threaten the health of the manufacturing sector. I urge you to fund Enterprise Minnesota to help manufacturers like us navigate these uncertain times.

Sincerely,

Ann Anderson, Vice President
The Tongue & Groove Store