



March 21, 2025

Senate Capital Investment Committee
Room 1100 Minnesota Senate Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55155

RE: Support for the Renovation of the Xcel Energy Center Arena Complex

Chair Sen. Sandy Pappas, Lead Sen. Karin Housley, and Senate Capital Investment Committee members:

On behalf of Minnesota Sports and Events (MNSE), I want to share our support for the proposed renovation of the Xcel Energy Center Arena Complex. This project represents a critical investment in our state's ability to attract and retain premier events while driving significant economic impact for Saint Paul and the region.

The Xcel Energy Center has long been a cornerstone of Minnesota's sports and entertainment scene, drawing millions of visitors each year and serving as a key driver of downtown Saint Paul's economy. This winter, the Xcel Energy Center will take its place on the world stage as the City of Saint Paul hosts the 2026 IIHF World Junior Championship, bringing international attention and economic benefits to the community and the entire region. This global hockey tournament is a testament to our state's deep commitment to the sport and foreshadows the types of high-profile events that we could attract with state-of-the-art upgrades. If we want to continue elevating Saint Paul as a must-visit destination, we must invest in our biggest economic asset—the Xcel Energy Center Arena Complex.

MNSE exists to position Minnesota as a premier destination for national and international sporting events. This is an increasingly aggressive market, and we must provide world-class facilities that meet the expectations of athletes, fans, and event organizers. A renovated and modernized Arena Complex will ensure we can continue to attract marquee events, drive visitor spending, and create lasting economic benefits for local businesses and workers.

This is our moment to take Saint Paul—and Minnesota—to the next level. Investing in this renovation is not just about maintaining the status quo; it's about ensuring downtown Saint Paul thrives, exceeds expectations, and stands out on the world stage. We supportive of this project to secure the future of our sports and events economy and keep Minnesota at the forefront of the industry.

Sincerely,

Wendy Blackshaw
President & CEO