

# FACT SHEET | Expanding Opportunity for All Minnesotans

## *An Opportunity Agenda for a Better Minnesota*

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Governor Dayton is committed to building an economy that works for all Minnesotans, not just the wealthy few. That is why the Dayton Administration is proposing high-impact strategies to grow opportunity and create jobs with family sustaining wages for hardworking Minnesotans in every corner of the state. Governor Dayton's Opportunity Agenda includes strategic investments to prepare Minnesotans for jobs in growing industries, crack down on wage theft, and expand economic opportunities for Minnesotans who have historically been left behind.

### Expanding Statewide Economic Opportunity

- **Training for High Wage, High Demand Jobs** – The Minnesota PIPELINE project connects Minnesotans with training for jobs in high demand industries including advanced manufacturing, agriculture, health care services, and information technology. More than 300 Minnesotans already have completed a PIPELINE training program, allowing them to access good jobs without incurring the significant student debt associated with other forms of higher education. Governor Dayton has proposed a \$600,000 investment to expand the PIPELINE project and allow more Minnesotans to participate.
- **Ensuring Minnesotans Receive Wages Earned** – Wage theft occurs when employers do not pay employees what is owed for work already performed. Wage theft costs hardworking Minnesotans and their families millions of dollars they already have earned. The Department of Labor and Industry (DLI) estimates 39,000 Minnesota workers suffer from wage theft each year – costing workers \$11.9 million in wages. The Opportunity Agenda invests \$1 million to expand DLI's investigations and prevent wage theft.
- **Supporting Opportunity for Minnesotans with Disabilities** – The unemployment rate for Minnesotans with disabilities is more than double that of the general population. Minnesotans with disabilities who do find employment are far more likely to receive poverty-level wages. Governor Dayton has proposed a \$7 million investment in Minnesota's Vocational Rehabilitation program to ensure that Minnesotans with the most significant disabilities receive employment training and counseling, to ensure they are able to find and keep a job and live as independently as desired. The Opportunity Agenda also would make changes to help people with disabilities to live in their communities.
- **Cutting Taxes for Minnesotans** – Governor Dayton has proposed tax cuts that would benefit working and middle class Minnesota families, by cutting state taxes to match federal changes, and putting \$93 million back in the pockets of hardworking taxpayers through the Working Family Credit. More than 372,000 families would see more money on their bottom line under the plan from Governor Dayton.

### Investing in Opportunity for Minnesotans of Color and American Indians

- **Expanding Access to Apprenticeships in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Fields** – Apprenticeship programs combine job-related technical instruction with structured on-the-job learning experience to prepare Minnesotans for high-demand jobs and careers. Minnesota's LEAP initiative delivers grants to workforce training organizations that work with women, people of color, and members of other communities not traditionally involved in skilled trades. The Opportunity Agenda includes a \$100,000 investment to expand the grant initiative and help connect more Minnesotans of color with good-paying jobs in the skilled trades.
- **Opening the Door to the American Dream** – Americans have historically accumulated wealth and saved money for the future through homeownership. Currently, 77 percent of white households own their homes, while only 39 percent of households of color own their homes in Minnesota. This disparity is often aggravated by the unique barriers to homeownership facing Minnesotans of color. Governor Dayton's Opportunity Agenda would invest \$2 million to level the playing field for eligible first-time homebuyers with financial counseling and assistance with down payments and closing costs.
- **Protecting Equal Opportunity Across Minnesota** – To improve enforcement of state human rights law and make it easier for Minnesotans to file human rights complaints, Governor Dayton has proposed a \$2.3 million investment to open regional Department of Human Rights' offices in Duluth, Rochester, and Worthington. These offices ensure that individuals across Minnesota are afforded the protections and opportunities they deserve under state law.