



---

## **Debt Capacity Forecast**

Report to the Minnesota State Legislature | December 3, 2020

---

**Date:** December 3, 2020

**To:** Legislative Reference Library

**From:** Jim Schowalter, Commissioner



**Subject:** Report to the Legislature - Debt Capacity Forecast

Minnesota Statutes, Section 16A.105 requires the Commissioner of Management and Budget to prepare a debt capacity forecast to be delivered to the governor and legislature in February and November of each year.

Attached is the November 2020 debt capacity forecast.

Attachment

cc: Senator Paul Gazelka  
Senator Susan Kent  
Senator Julie Rosen  
Senator David Senjem

Representative Melissa Hortman  
Representative Kurt Daudt  
Representative Lyndon Carlson  
Representative Mary Murphy

---

# Minnesota Management and Budget Debt Capacity Forecast | November 2020

---

## Introduction

Minnesota Statutes, Section 16A.105 requires the Commissioner of Management and Budget (“MMB”) to prepare a debt capacity forecast to be delivered to the governor and legislature in February and November of each year.

## Statement of Indebtedness

The statement of indebtedness describes the amount of debt we are currently obligated to repay. As of November 30, 2020, the state of Minnesota has outstanding principal totaling \$7,810,605,000, which includes \$6,263,485,000 in outstanding principal for general obligation bonds (both various purpose and trunk highway bonds) and \$1,547,120,000 in outstanding principal for other tax-supported obligations. Please see the attached Exhibit 1 for more detail about these obligations.

The state has no general obligation short-term notes outstanding.

## Debt Service Costs

The details of the actual and forecasted debt service costs for all of the state’s tax-supported debt are provided in the following table. For the purpose of this forecast, the assumption for future capital budgets for various purpose general obligation bonds is \$880 million in the even-numbered years and \$240 million in the odd-numbered years. For trunk highway bonds, the forecast amounts for existing bond authorizations have been prepared based upon information provided by the Department of Transportation and do not assume any additional bond authorizations. The column entitled “Other Tax-Supported Bonds” reflects the actual debt service obligations in each fiscal year for the non-general obligation debt identified in Exhibit 1; it does not reflect the total amount appropriated in each fiscal year for such obligations. The estimate for interest rates used for future bond issues is derived from the IHS Markit (“IHS”) data used to develop the November 2020 Budget and Economic Forecast.

## Annual Debt Service Costs

(\$ in Thousands)

		General Obligation Bonds				
<u>Fiscal Year</u>		<u>Various Purpose</u>	<u>Trunk Highway Fund</u>	<u>Subtotal</u>	<u>Other Tax Supported Bonds</u>	<u>Total</u>
2015	actual	\$623,060	\$154,593	\$777,653	\$147,149	\$924,802
2016	actual	\$609,285	\$180,725	\$790,010	\$148,484	\$938,494
2017	actual	\$529,215	\$193,539	\$722,754	\$150,838	\$873,593
2018	actual	\$563,123	\$211,009	\$774,133	\$150,439	\$924,572
2019	actual	\$549,785	\$214,903	\$764,688	\$150,675	\$915,363
2020	actual	\$540,081	\$209,821	\$749,902	\$144,487	\$894,389
2021	forecast	\$515,544	\$177,571	\$693,115	\$145,383	\$838,498
2022	forecast	\$631,510	\$222,773	\$854,283	\$152,019	\$1,006,303
2023	forecast	\$625,435	\$256,735	\$882,170	\$154,743	\$1,036,913
2024	forecast	\$638,836	\$274,759	\$913,595	\$154,866	\$1,068,461
2025	forecast	\$643,718	\$278,734	\$922,451	\$155,142	\$1,077,593
2026	forecast	\$639,828	\$276,210	\$916,039	\$143,214	\$1,059,253
2027	forecast	\$657,190	\$274,672	\$931,862	\$143,792	\$1,075,654

*\*Totals may not add due to rounding.*

## Debt Authorized and Unissued

As of November 30, 2020, the state has authorized but not yet issued (sold) general obligation bonds for various purposes and trunk highway purposes totaling \$3,216,661,610. In addition to the general obligation bonds, the state has authorized appropriation bonds that have not been sold. The 2018, 2019 and 2020 Legislatures authorized the sale of \$240 million of state appropriation bonds by the Housing Finance Agency to finance a housing infrastructure bonding program, of which \$120.8 million remains unissued as of November 2020. The 2015 and 2017 Legislatures authorized \$22.5 million of state appropriation bonds for the Lewis and Clark Regional Water System project, of which \$3.5 million remains unissued as of November 2020. The 2020 Legislature authorized \$30.4 million of state appropriation bonds for state responses to releases, \$15 million of state appropriation bonds for public television equipment grants, and \$2 million of state appropriation bonds for state-owned electric vehicle charging infrastructure, which bonds remain unissued. The 2011 Legislature authorized \$10 million in state appropriation bonds to finance the pay-for-performance bond program, which bonds remain unissued. The total amount of authorized and unissued tax-supported obligations is \$3,431,231,610. All other currently authorized tax-supported obligations have been issued.

## Managing State Debt Capacity

MMB adopted Capital Investment Guidelines in December 2009, to measure and track the debt of the state. Debt or capital investment guidelines are used to assist in decision making, communicate policy goals, provide recommendations for the structure of debt issues, and demonstrate a commitment to long-term capital and financial planning. MMB's guidelines are intended to:

- Be consistent with measures used by the credit rating agencies and foster direct comparisons with the debt burdens of other states;
- Be comprehensive to ensure all kinds of tax-supported debt obligations are recognized; and
- Continue Minnesota's conservative financial management practices.

Adherence to a debt management policy signals to rating agencies and the capital markets that a government is well managed and therefore is likely to meet its debt obligations in a timely manner. The Capital Investment Guidelines are:

1. Total tax-supported principal outstanding shall be 3.25% or less of total state personal income.
2. Total amount of principal (both issued, and authorized but unissued) for state general obligations, state moral obligations, equipment capital leases, and real estate capital leases are not to exceed 6% of state personal income.
3. 40% of general obligation debt shall be due within five years and 70% within ten years, if consistent with the useful life of the financed assets and/or market conditions.

The first two guidelines help to determine our capacity for additional debt. Both guidelines compare the state's debt<sup>1</sup> to the state's personal income. The first comparison is what the state owes, based on the amount of debt we have sold. The second comparison is what the state would owe if all the debt that has been authorized were sold. The third guideline helps determine how well we manage how quickly we pay off our general obligation debt.

### Debt Capacity Guideline #1

Guideline #1 compares the total amount of debt the state has sold and currently owes to the state's personal income. Each bonding bill authorizes MMB to sell bonds and use the proceeds for the projects identified in the bill. For any given bond authorization, we typically sell bonds over a period of years to make the funds available for the projects when needed, and not sooner. For example, if \$240 million were authorized in 2021, we assume we would sell \$48 million of bonds in 2022, an additional \$132 million in 2023, and the remainder in the following years. It may be five years or more before the total amount authorized in each bonding bill is actually sold.

---

<sup>1</sup> "State debt" refers to tax-supported debt and includes state general obligation debt (both various purpose and trunk highway), certificates of participation and lease revenue bonds, state issued appropriation bonds, and other issuer bonds supported by a state appropriation.

Our measure for Guideline #1 is that the amount of debt sold and currently owed does not exceed 3.25% of personal income. The state is currently within Guideline #1. See Exhibit 2 for the State’s compliance with Guideline #1 for the past 10 years.

Tax-supported principal sold	\$7.811 billion
FY 2021 state personal income estimate – IHS forecast	\$344.218 billion
As a percent of state personal income, not to exceed 3.25%	2.27%
Estimate of maximum amount of tax-supported debt that could be sold today before exceeding Guideline #1*	\$3.376 billion*

\*Bonds authorized are typically not sold all at once; they are sold over several years.

### Debt Capacity Guideline #2

Guideline #2 compares the total amount of authorized state debt, including state moral obligations and equipment capital leases, to personal income. This guideline differs from the first guideline in that it includes all authorized state debt, whether it has been sold or not, and it also captures state moral obligations and equipment capital leases.

Our measure for Guideline #2 is that total debt authorized does not exceed 6% of personal income. The state is currently within Guideline #2. See Exhibit 2 for the State’s compliance with Guideline #2 for the past 10 years.

Total principal sold plus authorized and not yet sold	\$13.521 billion
FY 2021 state personal income estimate – IHS forecast	\$344.218 billion
As a percent of state personal income, not to exceed 6.0%	3.93%
Estimated maximum amount of additional tax-supported debt that could be authorized before exceeding Guideline #2	\$7.132 billion

### Debt Capacity Guideline #3

Guideline #3 evaluates how quickly we pay off our general obligation bonds. Our goal is that no less than 40% of our general obligation debt is paid within five years and no less than 70% within ten years. MMB structures general obligation debt to comply with this guideline.

Of the state’s general obligation bonds outstanding on June 30, 2020, 42.2 percent were scheduled to mature within five years and 74.0 percent were scheduled to mature with ten years. Furthermore, of the state’s general obligation bonds expected to be outstanding on June 30, 2021, 42.3 percent are scheduled to mature within five years and 75.0 percent are scheduled to mature with ten years. The state is currently within Guideline #3.

## Maximum Debt Capacity under Current Guidelines

The maximum debt capacity refers to the amount of additional debt that could be authorized each legislative session without exceeding our debt guidelines. This information can be used to answer the question of how big a bonding bill *could* be, but does not suggest how big a bonding bill *should* be. The table below shows the maximum annual new debt authorizations until the limit in either Guideline #1 or Guideline #2 is reached. Our calculations assume that the maximum amount of state debt would be authorized. The table also shows the additional general fund debt service costs resulting from the maximum authorizations.

### November 2020 Debt Capacity Report Maximum

<i>Dollars in millions</i>	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026
<b>Bonding Bill Assumed in Nov '20 Forecast</b>	\$240	\$880	\$240	\$880	\$240	\$240
<b>Maximum New Debt Authorizations Within Debt Guidelines</b>	\$3,225	\$895	\$800	\$2,175	\$1,800	\$1,700
	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027
<b>Impact on Guideline #1<sup>1</sup></b>	2.68%	3.15%	3.25%	3.17%	3.17%	3.25%
<b>Impact on Guideline #2<sup>1</sup></b>	4.64%	4.51%	4.32%	4.46%	4.50%	4.47%
<b>Additional Debt Service Required</b>	\$55	\$197	\$242	\$271	\$344	\$462

<sup>1</sup> Impacts to Guidelines #1 and #2 from a bonding bill passed during regular legislative session are first reported in a November debt capacity forecast and therefore shown in the following fiscal year

It is IMPORTANT to note that:

1. The amounts listed in the “Maximum New Debt Authorizations” line could be allocated among any of the following types of debt: various purpose general obligation bonds, trunk highway general obligation bonds, state general fund appropriation bonds, certificates of participation and real estate and equipment capital leases.
2. The assumptions for personal income are based on the November 2020 Forecast information provided by IHS. Changes to personal income in subsequent forecasts will change the estimated capacity of both Guidelines #1 and #2.
3. Impacts to Guideline #3 are not reflected in this table. MMB structures bond sales to remain in compliance with Guideline #3. The maximum debt authorizations shown in the table may require MMB to structure debt differently in the future, for example by frontloading the principal in certain maturities instead of selling bonds with level principal in each maturity.

## Capital Investment Guidelines

Exhibit 1

### Summary of Outstanding Principal as of 11/30/2020 As of November 2020, Budget and Economic Forecast

<b>Tax-Supported Debt (Guideline #1)</b>	<b>Principal Outstanding</b>	<b>Authorized, Unissued</b>	<b>Total</b>
All State General Obligation Debt			
General Fund State General Obligation Debt	4,219,155,000	1,874,739,392	6,093,894,392
Trunk Highway Fund General Obligation Debt	2,044,330,000	1,341,922,218	3,386,252,218
BCA Bemidji Lease Revenue Bonds	1,190,000	0	1,190,000
Other Real Estate Capital Leases:			
Ag/Health Buildings	26,315,000	0	26,315,000
DHS Building	31,430,000	0	31,430,000
MHFA Supportive Housing 2008	20,550,000	0	20,550,000
MHFA Housing Infrastructure 2012	22,305,000	0	22,305,000
MHFA Housing Infrastructure 2014	76,200,000	0	76,200,000
MHFA Housing Infrastructure 2015	10,840,000	0	10,840,000
MHFA Housing Infrastructure 2017	31,965,000	0	31,965,000
MHFA Housing Infrastructure 2018	75,145,000	4,515,000	79,660,000
MHFA Housing Infrastructure 2019	43,755,000	16,245,000	60,000,000
MHFA Housing Infrastructure 2020	0	100,000,000	100,000,000
U of M:			
TCF Bank Stadium	64,990,000	0	64,990,000
Biosciences Facilities	153,390,000	0	153,390,000
State General Fund Appropriation Refunding Bonds	428,025,000	0	428,025,000
Professional Football Stadium Appropriation Bonds	408,740,000	0	408,740,000
Certificates of Participation - Legislative Office Facility	69,965,000	0	69,965,000
Lewis and Clark Regional Water System Bonds	16,015,000	3,500,000	19,515,000
Duluth Regional Exchange Appropriation Bonds	66,300,000	32,910,000	99,210,000
Public Television Equipment Appropriation Bonds	0	15,000,000	15,000,000
Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Appropriation Bonds	0	2,000,000	2,000,000
Response to Releases Appropriation Bonds	0	30,400,000	30,400,000
Pay for Performance Appropriation Bonds	0	10,000,000	10,000,000
<b>TOTAL - Tax-Supported Debt</b>	<b>\$7,810,605,000</b>	<b>\$ 3,431,231,610</b>	<b>\$11,241,836,610</b>
 <b>Other Obligations (Guideline #2)</b>			
Tax-Supported Debt (issued and authorized but unissued)			\$11,241,836,610
MHFA Moral Obligation Debt <sup>(1)</sup>			1,704,985,000
MOHE Moral Obligation Debt			498,625,000
Equipment Leases			60,169,875
Guaranteed Energy Savings Program (GESP) Equipment Leases			15,752,970
<b>TOTAL - All Obligations</b>			<b>\$13,521,369,455</b>
FY 2021 State Personal Income Estimate - IHS Forecast:		\$344,218,000,000	
State Tax-Supported Debt as a Percent of Personal Income (Guideline #1):		2.27%	
Estimated maximum additional principal capacity for all tax-supported debt @ 3.25%:		\$ 3,376,480,000	
All Obligations as a Percent of Personal Income (Guideline #2):		3.93%	
Estimated maximum additional principal capacity for all obligations @ 6.0%:		\$ 7,131,710,545	

<sup>(1)</sup> MHFA has a \$5 billion statutory debt limit. However, several of the MHFA bonding programs are not issued as Moral Obligation debt. The bond programs that are not included because they are not secured by a debt service reserve fund subject to replenishment from Legislative appropriation are the conduit multifamily revenue bonds and bonds issued under Home Ownership Mortgage-backed Exempt Securities and Homeownership Finance Bonds.

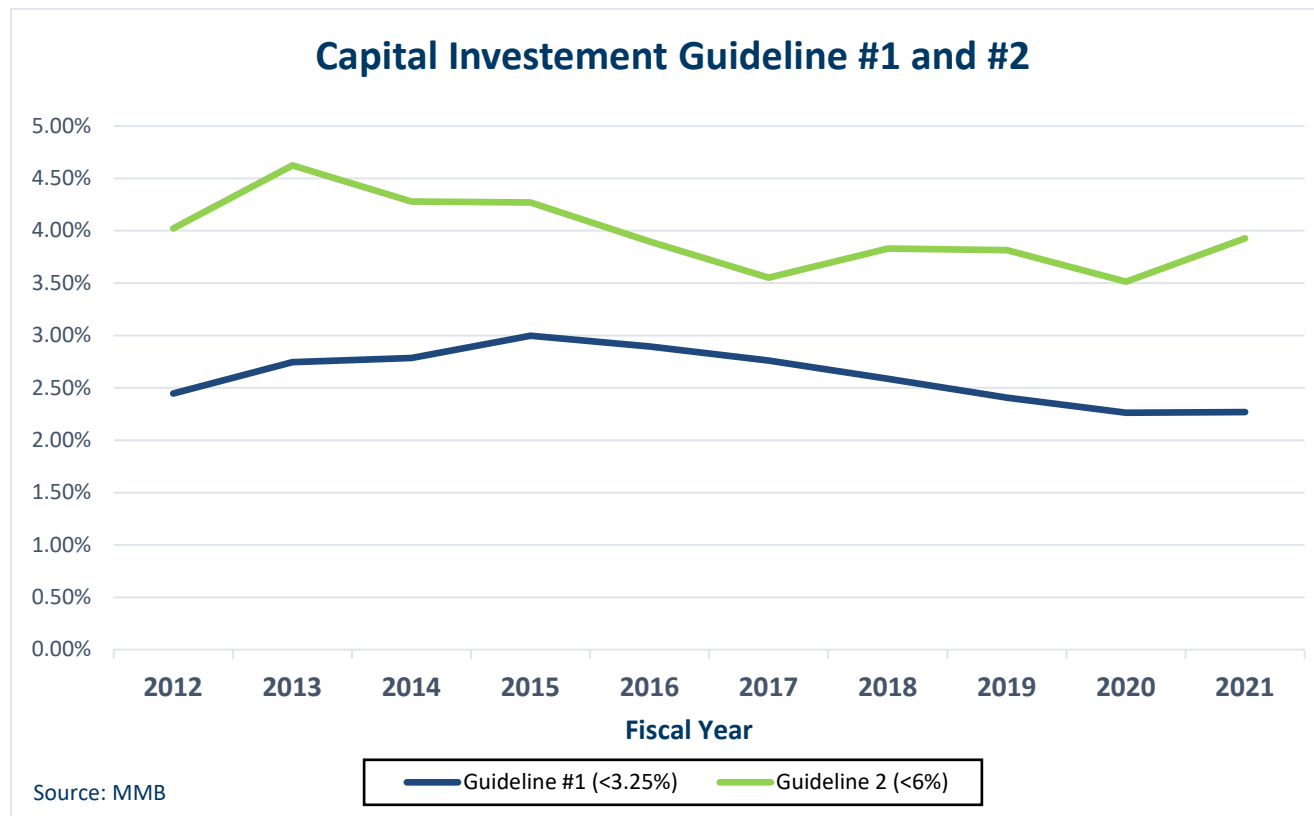




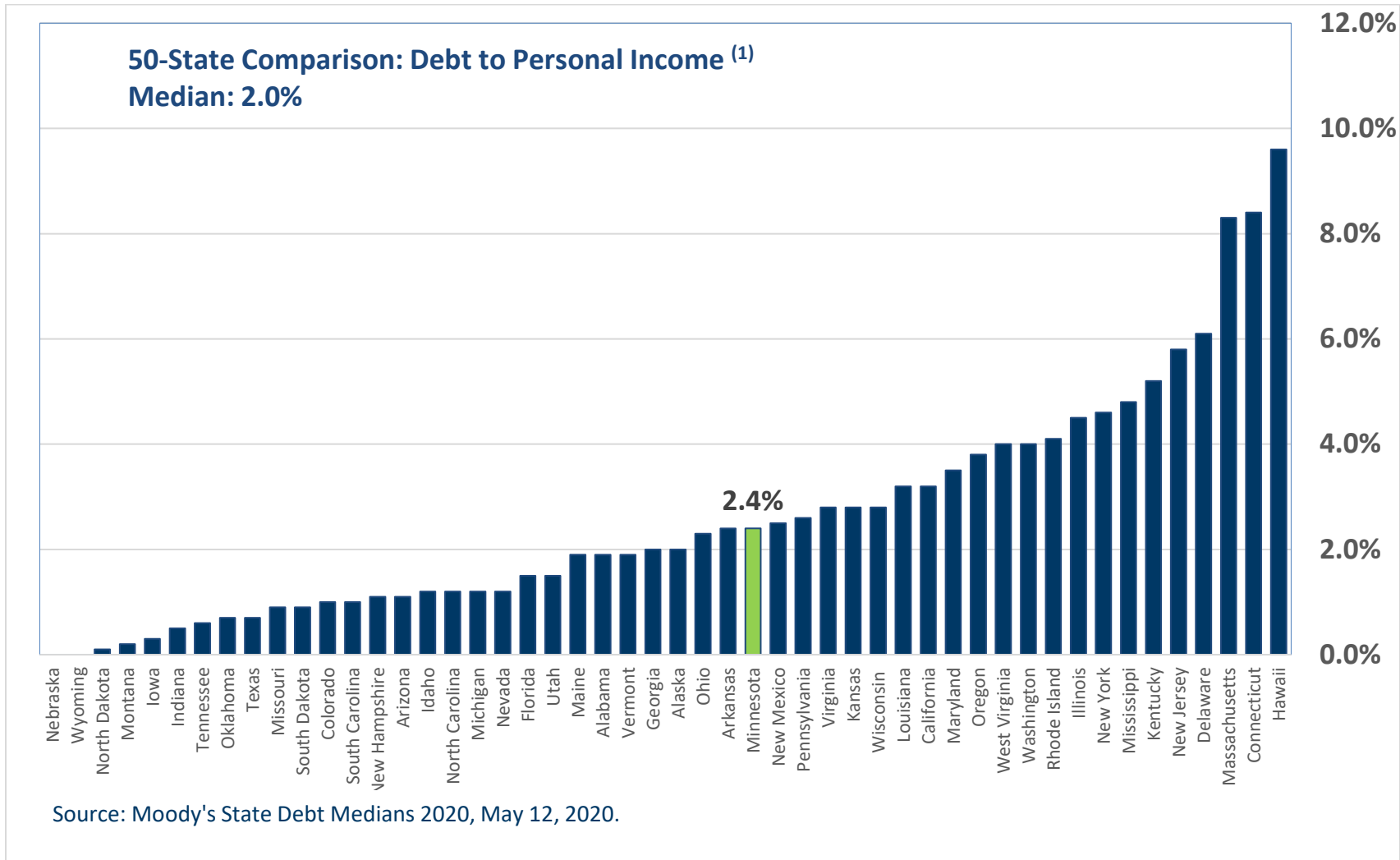
### Historic and Comparative Debt Metrics

This Exhibit provides additional information regarding the State’s debt capacity. It includes a graph showing historic compliance with Guideline #1 and Guideline #2 under the State’s Capital Investment Guidelines, as well as graphs showing direct comparisons to the debt of other states.

The following graph shows the amount of outstanding debt owed compared to state personal income (Guideline #1) and the total amount of authorized debt compared to state personal income (Guideline #2) for each of the last 10 fiscal years.

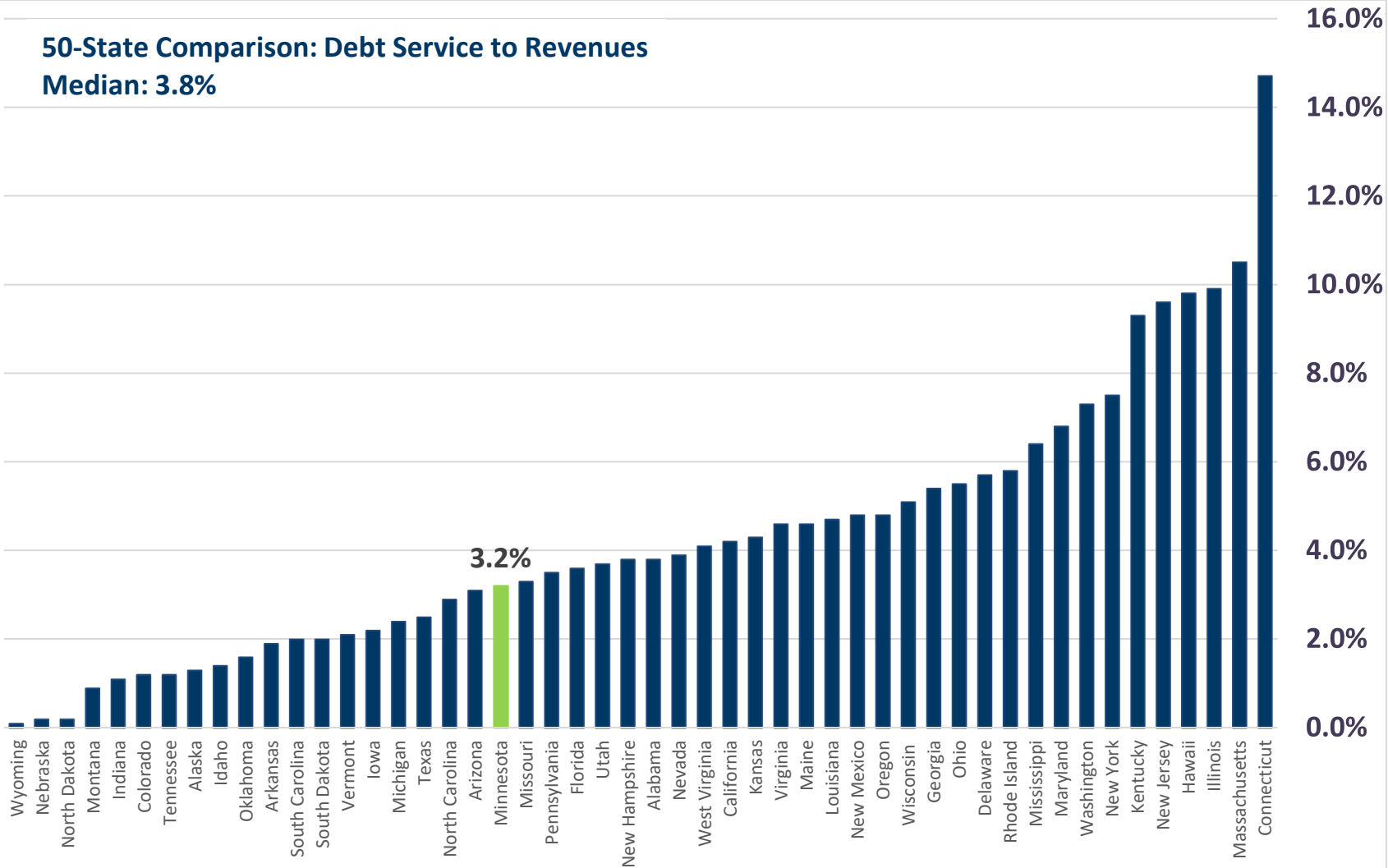


The following two graphs show how all 50 states compare on two commonly used debt capacity ratios – Debt to Personal Income and Debt Service to Revenues – highlighting how Minnesota ranks relative to the other states. The data presented in these graphs reflects debt issued through 2019 and does not yet reflect any impact from the most recent bonding bill.



<sup>(1)</sup> Moody's compared 2018 personal income to 2019 net tax supported debt, while MMB's calculations throughout this report use current personal income estimates from IHS and current outstanding net tax supported debt. These factors account for the difference in the ratio reported by Moody's in this chart from MMB's Guideline #1 calculation.

**50-State Comparison: Debt Service to Revenues**  
**Median: 3.8%**



Source: Moody's State Debt Medians 2020, May 12, 2020.