

OPINION

FIRST AMENDMENT “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press or the right of people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.”

OUR VIEW

Money plays important role

Borderland fared well in the state’s bonding bill with about \$11 million designated for three valuable local projects.

The final bill will provide \$8.5 million, the full amount requested, for sewer projects in communities surrounded by Voyageurs National Park, \$2.2 million for renovation of the Falls International Airport terminal, and about \$300,000 to Rainy River Community College’s clinical nursing lab.

The Voyageurs National Park Clean Water Project calls for construction of sewer collection infrastructure in communities adjacent to Minnesota’s only national park. A portion of the money will be used to extend sewer collection services to the end of Highway 11 East to Dove Island. The total larger project cost is estimated at nearly \$18 million with projects in Koochiching and St. Louis counties.

The area’s geology and geography makes individual sewer collection by property owners nearly impossible and very costly. As a result, some systems are failing and this project will help maintain the high quality of the lakes and rivers in the area that draw visitors and residents alike.

Renovation of the airport terminal, estimated at a total cost of \$11.3 million, will allow this community to serve more people more efficiently. As a result it will provide an economic boost by allowing international

and charter flights now turned away to land here, clear U.S. Customs and Border Protection security measures, and purchase fuel, catering services, crew accommodations and other items before leaving.

The community will benefit by renovating the current clinical nursing lab at the college, created to accommodate 20 students in 1977. The facility, which provides qualified workers to local and outside health care providers, is outdated and must be modernized to keep our students current with technology.

Koochiching County and International Falls officials commented this week about the importance of the money to the projects. The county board and Falls City Council are expected to send notes of appreciation to the area’s state lawmakers and Gov. Mark Dayton for understanding the local challenges and convincing the rest of the Legislature of the needs.

The value of funding the projects can be considered in the short- and long-term. Clearly, all three projects will put to work people who will spend money in the local economy. But all three projects will also benefit the larger community that has come to rely on these facilities for the future.

Keeping competitive with technology, education and the changing needs of a community play a crucial role in achieving local economic diversity and stability. The money that will come from the state will help toward that end.

STAR TRIBUNE
SACK

MICHELE BACHMANN
PONDER'S HER NEXT MOVE



Taking a walk through history

The small town of Foley, Minnesota, with its meandering brook was a welcome sight that morning. I had grown up in Foley during World War II and was returning to walk its streets and remember those bittersweet years. It was dawn on a Sunday morning, and as I had hoped, the streets were empty:

A chill was in the air as I crossed the brook and stopped at the courthouse lawn. There I closed my eyes and heard the women sobbing and smelled the coffee and donuts, and I saw the men waiting near a bus that would take them off to war. My only brother was among them. I was nine years old, and as the men filed silently into the bus, a foreboding swept over me.

The foreboding soon became focused on the railroad depot. When a family lost someone in the war, the depot agent had



to deliver the devastating telegram. Eventually, just the sight of the poor man terrified me.

Leaving the courthouse, I walked east to the big stone church. Hard times and the war had brought the community to its knees, and the church was full. Wisps of incense hung in the air as the parishioners sent their needs heavenward. And near the front, a young boy knelt praying for the safe return of his brother.

I continued east to where our football field used to be. A big crowd was on its feet yelling. Foley had just finished the season undefeated and

only Milaca had managed to score against us. As co-captain I was proud of the team.

Our lives changed after that last game. Blushing girls smiled at us in the hallways, and people complimented us on the streets. We could hardly wait for basketball season. A newspaper article said Foley had never been in the state basketball tournament but this was going to be the year.

Surprisingly, we were soundly defeated in the district finals. Our coach berated us and said success had gone to our heads and we had become overconfident. He was right

— pride did indeed cometh before our fall. It was an unforgettable lesson.

Then I turned and strolled through the familiar neighborhoods and remembered the people who had lived there. Without TV or computers, they had time to visit on their front porches during hot summer evenings. And there was time for old Jim Bracken to sit in front of the pool hall and talk about the Spanish-American War and for Boone Crace to describe the spring sound of prairie chickens booming on the edge of town — and time for a wide-eyed young boy to sit and listen.

Unfortunately, many of us have had to leave hometowns like Foley and International Falls. But these small towns were the wellspring of our values and dreams, and they will remain part of us forever.

How to contact your lawmakers

FEDERAL OFFICES

President Barack Obama
Democrat
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W.
Washington, D.C., 20500
202-456-1111
Website:
www.whitehouse.gov
E-mail:
president@whitehouse.gov

U.S. Rep. Rick Nolan
2447 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington DC 20515
202-225-6211
Website: www.nolan.house.gov
Facebook: US Rep Rick Nolan
Twitter: @USRepRickNolan

Duluth Office of
Congressman Rick Nolan
11 East Superior Street
Suite 125
Duluth, MN 55802
Phone: 218-464-5095
Fax: 218-464-5098

Brainerd Office of
Congressman Rick Nolan
Brainerd City Hall
501 Laurel Street
Brainerd, MN 56401
218-454-4078

U.S. Sen. Amy Klobuchar
Democrat
302 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
202-224-3244

Minnesota Office:
1200 Washington Avenue

South, Suite 250
Minneapolis, MN 55415
612-727-5220
Website:
www.klobuchar.senate.gov

U.S. Sen. Al Franken
Democrat
Senate Hart Building 320
Washington DC 20510
202-224-5641
Website:
www.alfranken.com
E-Mail:
info@franken.senate.gov

STATE OFFICES

Gov. Mark Dayton
130 State Capitol
75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN, 55155
800-657-3717
E-mail:
Mark.Dayton@state.mn.us

Rep. David Dill
571 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155
651-296-2190
800-339-0466
rep.david.dill@house.mn
Assistant: Joan Harrison

Sen. Tom Bakk
75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Capitol, Room 226
St. Paul, MN 55155-1606
Capitol Office phone:
(651) 296-8881
Email:
www.senate.mn/
senatorbakkemail

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Do Democrats really tax and spend?

To the editor,
The Minnesota Legislature has just adjourned. Dave Dill and Tom Bakk will soon arrive to schmooze our city and county officials about what a great job they’ve done for the hardworking families of Minnesota. Based upon previews of the spin, the snake oil sold during this victory lap won’t quite tell the entire story.

For the first time this century, the DFL controlled the governorship and both chambers of the legislature. There was an enormous backlog of items on the liberal wish-list after Gov. (Tim) Pawlenty bottled up wanton spending for eight years and the GOP legislature blocked it for two additional years.

This legislature was the first opportunity in

decades for Minnesota taxpayers to see what unfettered DFL spending actually looks like — and spend they did. Starting with a budget of \$35.3 billion, the DFL budget spends \$41.7 billion or \$3,000 more spending for every Minnesota family.

In addition, they spent tens of billions more that doesn’t show up on the general fund budget. This includes \$21 billion in federal money, \$1.7 billion from gas taxes, \$1 billion in health care taxes, \$1.3 billion from motor vehicle sales taxes, \$1.3 billion in motor vehicle licenses taxes, \$2 billion in fees and charges and another \$3 billion in miscellaneous revenue. Dedicated environmental spending is extra as is dedicated funding from the Outdoor, Arts and Clean Water amendment tax. They spent about \$70

billion in all.

The previous GOP budget left the DFL with a billion dollar plus surplus that clearly should have been returned to the taxpayers who overpaid. Instead, they spent the surplus, too.

But even that wasn’t enough. After spending every dime in sight, they got out the state credit card and spent another billion dollars on a bonding bill stuffed full of pork projects from their wish list.

Worse yet, the DFL tucked a largely unreported Obamacare/MNsure bailout of several hundred million dollars into a spending bill. This is a financial time-bomb that won’t go off (and the press won’t report) until after the November election.

Gov. (Mark) Dayton’s track record is even

worse; spending under his leadership has increased an unbelievable 33 percent. Every budget he has signed has been a record high budget.

When you see our DFL legislators stopping by to explain what a great job they did, keep in mind that the ideologically-driven mindless spending they did is unsustainable and the damage they did to Minnesota families and the state economy will last for many years.

Terry Stone
International Falls, MN

Editor’s note:
Stone serves as the local Republican Party chairman. “These observations are my own and I am not authorized to represent the position of any organization,” he said in an email about the above letter to The Journal.

Share your point of view

Make a difference by writing a letter to the editor or contributing to our online discussions. The Journal’s Opinion page is where meaningful community discussions take place.

The Journal welcomes letters from readers

Letters should be limited to 500 words or less. Longer letters may be edited. Letters must be signed and include the telephone number and address of the letter writer. Only the author’s city address will be published. Mail letters to The Journal, 1602 Highway 71, International Falls 56649. Letters can also be sent by e-mail to laurel@ifallsjournal.com.