

Vikings Stadium proposals bad for Minneapolis taxpayers

Written by 8th Ward Councilmember Elizabeth Glidden
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Vikings Bill: Just days before the end of session, a bill has been introduced to fund a Vikings Stadium – a shocking move when the state is dealing with a deficit of over \$5 billion and cuts to essential services everywhere. The bill proposed taking funding now used to support our Convention Center for a Vikings Stadium. On behalf of the City of Minneapolis, I testified against the bill with these key messages:

First, Minneapolis opposes any proposal that relies on Minneapolis taxpayers as funders. This is a state-wide issue not one to put on the back of a municipality. Second, Minneapolis opposes diversion of the sales tax that now supports the Convention Center for any Vikings stadium proposal. The Convention Center is one of the biggest economic generators in the state, with an economic impact of about \$270M annually -- this is about 4 times the impact of any Vikings stadium. Diverting critical support for the Convention Center is bad policy for our region and our state.

While the Vikings proposal appears dead for this year, we must be ready for proposals sure to come in 2011.

Budget: Recently, the Minnesota Supreme Court ruled that Gov. Pawlenty's "unallotment" action used last year to unilaterally balance the budget was illegal. While this ruling confirms that the executive branch must work with the legislative branch to get things done, our State is left with an even bigger deficit to address by the end of session - Sunday, May 16. For the City of Minneapolis, we remain uncertain if state aid to cities will be further cut, forcing further reductions to city budgets – funding for police, fire, and roads - across Minnesota. Stay tuned for budget and other updates based on the end of the legislative session after