



## Key Messages

- 1. Please support funding for history in the 2009 session, including funding for the programs and operations of the Minnesota Historical Society and appropriate funding for history through the Legacy Act.\***

In 2009, the state of Minnesota faces a serious challenge in forming the state's budget in the midst of a national and global economic crisis. However, the state needs to continue funding the work and programs of the Minnesota Historical Society because of the significant impact they have on citizens of Minnesota. In addition, Minnesota has an opportunity to fund history programs through the Legacy Act, which will provide educational and economic development benefits for today's Minnesotans and future generations.

Since 1849, the people of Minnesota have made preserving their history a high priority and have been generous in funding the Minnesota Historical Society. The Minnesota Historical Society is first and foremost the caretaker of Minnesota's stories. Our massive collections tell the tales of Minnesota through the ages. Our innovative museum exhibitions, extensive collections and libraries, educational programs, historic sites and book publishing preserve the state's cultural heritage.

Please continue supporting the work and outreach of the Society through the strong tradition of funding history.

- 2. History Matters because history is really about creating a better future. We educate Minnesota's children and adults, add value to our state's tourism industry, preserve our cultural heritage for today's and future generations, and help people make connections to our shared past.**

Each year, about 275,000 Minnesota schoolchildren visit our sites and museums on field trips. Nearly 25,000 students participate in History Day each year – a program for which Minnesota is heralded as a national leader. For the first time, Minnesota history is a required part of the state's educational system, with thousands of students statewide using the Society's award-winning curriculum, "Northern Lights" as their guide.

The Minnesota Historical Society supports the state's tourism industry through its 26 historic sites and museums located throughout the state and through their ongoing programming and events. In total, nearly 1 million people visit our sites and museums each year. Each individual historic site plays an important role in its area's ability to attract tourists, as well as local visitors, which in turn promotes the area's economic growth.

- 3. The Society and history partners reach into every corner of the state, through our historic sites and museums, our statewide preservation work, our publications and our expansive website.**

Over 10 million people use our services each year by visiting our sites, museums, library and web site, and by taking part in our educational programs. The Minnesota Historical Society has nearly 19,000 members – more than any other state historical organization in the country.

- 4. History Matters!**

Previous generations invested in the rich historical resources we enjoy today and the people of Minnesota have entrusted the stewardship of these resources to the Minnesota Historical Society and other organizations. We owe it to our children and to future generations to make sure those resources, as well as records, collections, buildings and places that reflect life in Minnesota today and in the years to come, are collected, protected and handed down, so that the Minnesota story can continue to be told.



## What is the Legacy Amendment?

During the 2008 legislative session, the Outdoor and Cultural Legacy Bill (Legacy Amendment) was approved and placed on the November general election ballot. The ballot question asked Minnesota voters to amend the State's constitution to increase the state sales tax by 3/8ths of a percent and dedicate the revenue for outdoors and cultural purposes.

The constitutional question passed with the support of over 56% of those voting. It is very clear that citizens support the purpose and intent of the Legacy Amendment.

In the final language of the bill, 19.75% of the additional sales tax is dedicated to arts and cultural heritage, which **includes funding for Minnesota history**. According to current estimates, there could be close to \$50 million of revenue available to be used for the preservation and enhancement of state history, culture and arts. However, with uncertainties in our economy, this number could go down. Decisions on determining funding priorities and distribution mechanisms will be made by the legislature this session.

Therefore, it is imperative that you provide your voice and support to help guide legislators in the decisions they will make on the allocation of these funds to ensure that Minnesota's history remains a priority.

**Please contact members of the House Outdoor and Cultural Resources Finance Division and members of the Senate Economic Development Budget and Housing Division and send a message of support for funding Minnesota history through the Legacy Amendment.**