

Dear **XXXX**

Congratulations on your election victory!

As you begin working on the issues and challenges facing our state in the upcoming session, I hope you will recognize the importance of supporting the Afterschool Community Learning Act.

The Afterschool Community Learning Act 1) provides state funds for afterschool and summer learning and enrichment programs, 2) leverages private funds through a Challenge Grant to the State of Minnesota, and 3) calls for a statewide transportation study to better understand how we can maximize public transportation to help children, youth and families access afterschool and summer learning opportunities.

Participation in quality afterschool and summer learning programs has been linked to better school attendance, better grades and test scores, more positive attitudes toward school work, better interpersonal skills, and increased graduation rates. They also build real world skills such as team work and project management that are vitally important as our young people become increasingly active members of our community and our workforce.

XXX Add personal story from your program **XXXX**

I have personally seen how young people in your community have benefitted from afterschool programs.

I understand that our state is facing a great economic hardship and that you will need to evaluate all state level investments. I believe strongly that afterschool and summer learning are strategic investments that help gaps in learning and development for children and youth. In addition, it is important to note the Department of Education received nearly \$60 million in requests for the \$5 million Afterschool and Community Learning Grant program in 2007, clearly making the case that these learning opportunities are essential investments for our communities and state.

Congratulations again on your election victory. I hope to hear back from you regarding your interest in supporting afterschool and summer learning opportunities beyond the classroom in our community. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns. I can be reached at **[insert phone number]** or **[insert email]**.

Sincerely,

XXNameXX