

Says projects will create jobs, spur economic growth

Washington, DC – Today, Rep. Walz voted to make targeted investments in areas that will rebuild our economy and to secure critical projects in southern Minnesota that will create jobs.

“My number one priority is rebuilding our economy and creating jobs in Minnesota,” said Rep. Walz. “Local leaders who are closest to understanding our deeply unmet needs in southern Minnesota brought these projects to our attention. I am pleased to stand up for veterans, farmers, the National Guard, educators, cancer research, Highway 14 and other critical public investment projects.”

Since being elected to Congress, Walz has been leading the fight to improve transparency and accountability in Washington. Walz has posted his requests online every year of his tenure in Congress. He supports the added scrutiny this year which requires all Members of Congress to publish earmark requests and dollar amounts requested on their website at the time the requests are submitted to the House Appropriations Committee.

The following projects in southern Minnesota were included in the Consolidated Appropriations Act passed by the House this afternoon:

- \$100,000 for Bolder Options Expansion in Rochester, Minnesota

- \$1,000,000 for the Minnesota Valley Regional Rail Authority Rehabilitation Project

- \$1,000,000 for the National Child Protection Training Center at Winona State University

- \$1,000,000 for the Hormel Institute Expansion in Austin, Minnesota

- \$250,000 for the Heart of New Ulm research and demonstration project in New Ulm, Minnesota

- \$300,000 for the 55th Street Expansion in Rochester, Minnesota

- \$584,400 for construction of an interchange on Highway 14 extending Blue Earth County

Roads 12 to 17.

The 2010 earmarks requested by Congressman Walz met at least one of these key criteria:

Transformative: has the potential to make a significant improvement in the economy of a community or drastically improve safety for residents.

Cost-Effective: uses limited funds efficiently and effectively in a way that drives local economic development.

Job Creators: creates, saves or attracts jobs in Minnesota's 1st Congressional District.

The Consolidated Appropriations Act builds on our strategic economic plan to provide short-term help for the hardest hit Americans during this economic crisis and long-term solutions to grow our economy for years to come. This bill increases funding for infrastructure, health, and education to create jobs immediately while investing in our local communities and workforce for the long term. It invests \$1.4 billion in training and support services for workers impacted by mass layoffs and plant closures. To support small businesses – the engines of job growth in this country – it provides additional lending funds for firms having trouble borrowing capital in this market.

As part of our commitment to our veterans, this bill increases funding for services to the men and women who served our country so bravely – including increases for mental health services, health care in rural areas and assistance to homeless veterans. It boosts funding for military construction in order to make sure our troops have all of the facilities they need to help keep our country safe. It also provides increased funding for state and local law enforcement to keep our communities safe here at home.

“Our troops and their families sacrifice a tremendous amount for this country,” said Rep. Walz. “We have a moral obligation to support the military families in Minnesota and across the nation before, during and after their service. This bill does just that, with programs and services that will play a significant role in improving the quality of life for our brave men and women in the Armed Services.”

Beyond investments in job creation, our troops and their families, veterans, healthcare, education, transportation and other infrastructure, the remaining budget items in the bill saw only a 1% increase in funding that is completely paid for.

“We know that growing our economy and creating jobs depends on smart, targeted investments,” said Rep. Walz “But we cannot do that by passing on the bill for investments to our children and grandchildren. That’s why we looked closely at our budget to eliminate and cut programs that aren’t working in order to reduce the deficit and put us on a path toward fiscal responsibility.”

-30-