

Dawn Gillman
State Representative

District 17A



**Minnesota
House of
Representatives**

April 19, 2024

The Honorable Tom Emmer (WHIP)
464 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-2306

Dear Honorable Tom Emmer,

I am writing to express my support for the Dassel-Cokato School Waterline project the City of Cokato is working on with your staff. The project provides palatable drinking water to the students and staff and provides additional fire suppression capacity. I am working at the state level to get additional funding for the project through the Minnesota Bonding Bill. If successful we will be able to reduce the federal request.

The waterline project is probably overdue. When the Dassel-Cokato Schools merged in the early 1970s they ran a sewer line to Cokato, but water was provided through wells. Palatable drinking water standards have changed over the past 50 years. The school should not be in the water treatment business. It is better for the school to leverage the expertise from the City of Cokato Public Work staff. The Dassel-Cokato school is unique from the standpoint, when the schools merged, the high school and middle school were built between the two communities rather than in one of the communities as most school Districts did when they merged.

This project also allows for residential and commercial development between Dassel and Cokato in a managed and coordinated manner. Because of the school, the two communities have a synergy, as such there is a natural tendency for the communities to grow towards each other.

The City has worked with the school district on funding and is set up to provide a 25/75% cost share for the project. They have conducted a study and have a clear understanding of the project scope. Most recently, they started negotiations with MNDOT on access to the Highway 12 right-of-way.

This is a very needed project, and as I said it is probably long overdue. The city and the school district are working well together. If Federal funding is received as a Community Project Fund the project will be a great success.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dawn C. Gillman".

Dawn Gillman
State Representative 17A



Dassel - Cokato District Office

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Congressmen Tom Emmer
1107 Hazeltine Blvd
Suite 476
Chaska, Minnesota 55318

Subject: Support Needed for Palatable Water Project for Dassel-Cokato School District

Dear Congressman Emmer,

I am writing to seek your support for a critical initiative aimed at providing palatable water to approximately 1200 students in the Dassel-Cokato School District. This project marks a vital partnership between the city of Cokato and the School District, addressing not only the health and safety of our students but also enhancing fire suppression capabilities. Over the years, the Dassel-Cokato Schools have relied on wells for water supply since the merger in the early 1970s. However, evolving standards for palatable drinking water underscore the necessity for a modernized approach. It is evident that the school should not be tasked with water treatment responsibilities, but rather collaborate with the expertise of the City of Cokato Public Works staff. Furthermore, this project extends beyond immediate needs, as it opens avenues for residential and commercial development between Dassel and Cokato in a coordinated manner.

The School District and City have diligently planned for this endeavor, committing to a 25/75% cost share for the project and conducting a comprehensive engineering study to define the scope. Securing Federal funding for this community project would significantly bolster its success and impact. Your support in advocating for this initiative at the Federal level would be invaluable in realizing our shared goal of providing safe and sustainable water infrastructure for our students and community.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and I look forward to your favorable consideration.

Sincerely,

Mark Raymond
Dassel-Cokato Superintendent