



## Range Association of Municipalities and Schools

5525 Emerald Avenue

Mt. Iron, MN 55768

[www.ramsmn.org](http://www.ramsmn.org) • 218.748.7651

# 2025 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

## RANGE FIRST

- **CRITICAL MINERALS** – RAMS actively opposes all legislation at the local, state, and federal level of government that would restrict the exploration and development of copper, nickel, helium, and precious metal mining in northeastern Minnesota, including NewRange, Twin Metals, and Talon Metals.
- **IRON MINING AND FORESTRY** – RAMS supports policies that allow Iron Mining and Forestry industries to continue to operate and generate wealth for our communities.
- **PROTECT THE DJJ** – RAMS will work to safeguard the Douglas J. Johnson Economic Protection Trust Fund at the Department of Iron Range Resources so that these funds are used only within the Taconite Assistance Area.
- **ENVIRONMENTAL CONGRESS** – RAMS supports an Environmental Congress event on the Iron Range, a unique state-wide forum to discuss environmental issues, centering the experience of the Taconite Assistance Area.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT, CAPITAL INVESTMENT, BONDING

- **CAPITAL INVESTMENT (BONDING)** -- RAMS supports the passage of a state capital investment (bonding) bill during the 2025 legislative session and supports that at least 50 percent of the investment be allocated to communities in Greater Minnesota. As a bonding bill requires a super-majority of votes to pass, we ask Legislators on both sides of the aisle to work together to pass this important effort.
- **LGA** -- RAMS asks the Legislature to protect the hard-won gains in Local Government Aid (LGA), County Program Aid (CPA), and supports an increase in township aid.
- **HOUSING** – RAMS supports investments and policies that increase housing options for all income levels, including funding the Workforce Housing Grant Program to a minimum of \$50 million per year. RAMS supports innovative programs and approaches for developers and builders.
- **TAX FORFEIT LEGACY** – RAMS supports the creation of a compensatory pot for municipalities and counties recuperating ongoing costs associated with maintenance of blighted, tax forfeit properties.

## EDUCATION

- **STABLE AND EFFICIENT SCHOOLS** – RAMS asks the Legislature to increase the general education formula; fully fund special education at the federal and state level; create a policy and funding resolution for non-certified unemployment insurance mandates; provide sustainable READ act funding; increase Voluntary Pre-K seats for rural areas; and expand using direct certification for school programs.





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- **ALLOWABLE USES** –RAMS supports additional allowable uses for Student Support personnel aid including as a local attendance pilot for districts.
- **PERMANENT SCHOOL FUND** – RAMS supports increased distributions of the permanent School Fund to rural school districts, including revenue-generating areas.
- **LOCAL OPTION REVENUE, SEASONAL TAX BASE REPLACEMENT** – RAMS supports increasing Local Optional Revenue (LOR) authority. RAMS supports a legislative package that allows for seasonal recreation tax base replacement aid.

### RURAL HEALTH CARE, EMERGENCY SERVICES

- **TAXING AUTHORITY** – RAMS supports changes in taxing authority that fund the delivery of services where they are needed and support communities that provide regional services.
- **RURAL MEDICAL SCHOOL** – RAMS supports state investment in a Rural Medical School in Duluth focused on training rural providers.
- **MEDICARE AND MEDICAID** – RAMS advocates for investment increases in Medicare and Medicaid as well as innovative and efficient delivery of those local services.

### PERMITTING REFORM, ENERGY

- **REGULATORY REFORM** -- RAMS recognizes and supports continued efforts that create a transparent and meaningful regulatory and/or permitting reform process leading to achievable outcomes.
- **ENERGY** – RAMS supports an “all of the above” strategy for increasing access to sustainable, affordable, and novel energy solutions for residential, commercial, and large-scale industrial consumers.

### BROWNFIELDS TO BROADBAND— LAND USE CYCLES

- **INVENTORY AND INVESTMENT** – RAMS supports commissioning a state-wide brownfield site inventory; tracking and increasing state and federal Department of Energy investment in local brownfield redevelopment; collaboration and policies that deliver these funds outside the 7-county metro area.
- **BROADBAND** – RAMS supports policies and investments in rural broadband, prioritizing cooperation that delivers federal and state resources to the Taconite Assistance Area.

*Range Association of Municipalities and Schools (RAMS) The organization represents more than 155,000 residents and 69 public sector units of government, including 27 cities, 15 public school districts, and 27 townships in the 13,000 square mile Taconite Assistance Area (TAA) of northeast Minnesota. As an organization, RAMS has represented the interests of the Iron Range region for 85 years.*

