

**Paul E. Gazelka**  
State Senator

Senate District 9  
Morrison, Todd, Wadena  
and Cass Counties



**Minnesota**  
Senate

**MAJORITY LEADER**

March 27, 2019

The Honorable Melissa Hortman  
Speaker of the House  
Minnesota House of Representatives  
463 State Office Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Speaker Hortman:

I have appreciated our efforts to work cooperatively this session. Working together, we can do great things for the people of Minnesota. I write today to ask for your assistance in setting a date for the Joint Convention on Regent Selection.

The University of Minnesota (University) is a world-class research institution and provides tremendous value to our state. Minnesotans invest more than \$3 billion taxpayer dollars in higher education, with more than \$1.3 billion of that to the University. This type of investment requires a Board of Regents filled with experienced and qualified people to serve as the main source of oversight.

The Regent Candidate Advisory Council (RCAC), a 24-person committee made up almost entirely members of the public worked countless hours to screen, interview, and recommend highly-qualified candidates for our consideration. In February, the Joint Committee on Regent Selection met and recommended five candidates to fill four open spots. Much like the RCAC, the Joint Committee process was fair, open, and exhaustive.

The next step in this crucial process is the setting of a date for the Joint Convention. We are already behind schedule of previous Joint Conventions and we need to bring the process to a conclusion. The seating of new Regents is even more critical at this juncture because of the leadership change that will occur with President Kaler's departure in July. As legislative leaders, we would be doing President-Designee Joan Gabel a disservice by not seating Regents in a timely fashion.

We had previously discussed April 1 as a potential date, but if that is too soon for arrangements to be made, the evening of Monday, April 8 would be available for the Senate. Please let me

know if these dates will work, or if not, I ask that you propose a date that will allow us to meet prior to the scheduled Easter/Passover break. As you know, when we come back from break we will be focused on budget discussions.

Let's work together to complete our duty of electing Regents and help move the University forward into the future. The Minnesota Senate stands ready to do this important job.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Paul Gazelka". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Paul" being more prominent than the last name "Gazelka".

Paul Gazelka  
Senate Majority Leader

cc: Rep. Kurt Daudt, House Minority Leader  
Sen. Thomas M. Bakk, Senate Minority Leader  
Sen. Paul T. Anderson  
Rep. Connie Bernardy