



City of Grand Rapids, Michigan

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

ROSALYNN C. BLISS
MAYOR

May 14, 2019

The Honorable Senator Jim Runestad, Chair and
Honorable Members of the Senate Finance Committee
P.O. Box 30036
Lansing, Michigan 48909

Dear Senator Runestad,

I am writing to urge you to support Senate Bill 54. This legislation, sponsored by the Honorable Senator Wayne Schmidt, reinstates the State Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program, which is a proven and highly successful economic tool. In Grand Rapids, the program has been a key component to a myriad of projects that have generated millions of dollars in investment, created local and statewide jobs, and been a catalyst for the development of individual properties as well as entire blocks and neighborhoods. This incentive is imperative as our city continues to grow and draw in individuals, families and businesses from around the country – and as we shape our future both economically and socially.

The State Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program has helped many communities in their revitalization and growth efforts. Studies of the program's economic impact show significant positive outcomes in community revitalization, affordable housing, creation of skilled jobs and trades, and increased private investment. The program leveraged \$251 million in federal historic tax credits and \$1.46 billion in direct rehabilitation activity and created over 36,000 jobs from 1999 to 2011. As a result of these historic revitalization projects, Grand Rapids saw the birth of what has become a thriving construction and craftsman industry.

The State Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program is a rare and versatile economic tool that is capable of a wide reach. It's a catalyst for bringing life back to a downtown or warehouse district. It helps homeowners stay in their homes while increasing investments and owner occupancy. It enhances economic stability and quality of life, improves the built environment, creates sense of place and increases diversity. Michigan's economic revival requires incentives such as this program to focus investment where it is truly needed.

The City of Grand Rapids fully supports the program's reinstatement. We understand the far-reaching benefits this tool offers and, as such, we request your support of Senate Bill SB 54. We hope you will schedule this bill for consideration soon.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rosalynn Bliss". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Rosalynn" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Bliss".

Rosalynn Bliss

C: Members of the Senate Finance Committee
The Honorable Senator Wayne Schmidt
The Honorable Senator Winnie Brinks
Gary Heidel, Acting Executive Director, Michigan State Housing Development Authority