

Blake, Cumah (GOV)

From: Zakula, Linden (GOV)
Sent: Tuesday, April 28, 2015 10:43 PM
To: GMD; Smith, Tina (GOV)
Cc: Tincher, Jaime (GOV); Sen, Katy (GOV); Hume, Bob (GOV); Pederson, Molly (GOV); Hardy, Shawntera (GOV); Piper, Emily (GOV); Dornfeld, Joanna (GOV); Swenson, Matt (GOV)
Subject: Communications Decisions and Update - April 28, 2015
Attachments: 2015_04_28_move_minnesota_press_releases.docx; 2015_04_28_transcript_secretary_duncan_universal_pre_k.docx; 2015_04_29_water_quality_press_conference[1].docx

Communications Update

April 28, 2015

Governor – I know you and Matt spoke about tomorrow’s news event this evening. While the full MPCA report is very technical, I think the takeaway is clear, our water quality is getting worse and something needs to be done to fix it. We are planning on having Commissioner Stine open the event, then recommend you talking about the importance of our water quality and push for your buffer proposal. Since we expect environmental reporters to attend and have some technical questions, Commissioner Stine will stay after to try to address those after. One thing I would note, which we discussed the other morning at our buffer meeting: this report does show the water in NE Minnesota to be relatively clean and pristine and it gets worse the further south you go. This could be used as fodder by some mining proponents; however, I think this is a good event that will draw attention to water quality and provide a good venue for you to advocate for your buffer proposal.

DECISIONS

WATER REPORT RELEASE – Attached is the draft release for tomorrow morning’s news conference with MPCA Commissioner Stine. Please provide any edits to the following draft quotation.

“This report shows that in many areas of the state, the quality of water in our lakes, rivers, and streams is only getting worse,” said Governor Dayton. **“The degradation of our waterways has serious implications for our health, our economy, and our state’s future. We must take action this session to protect and improve our waters for generations to come.”**

STATEMENT ON CHILD NEGLECT STORY – **[Deadline Wednesday]** Tonight, KARE 11 ran Part 2 of their story about the case of child neglect and PCA fraud in Richfield. Tonight’s story focused on: “...the failure of DHS to protect the children through their required qualified professional visits, and what appears to be significant fraud of public funds in this case.” Commissioner Jesson sent you an email earlier this evening, updating you on the situation and DHS’s efforts. We will likely need to provide reaction to the reporter. He has asked for an on-camera interview with you, but we suggest giving him a statement along the following lines:

“It is unconscionable that these children were forced to live in such filthy, deplorable conditions. This situation is yet another example of the unacceptable shortcomings of our child protection systems. I have directed the Department of Human Services to fully investigate this matter, to determine how this possibly could have happened, and to root out any fraud involved in this case. I will not allow this legislative session to conclude without enacting substantial changes to our child protection systems, to ensure the safety of all our children. Such instances of abuse, neglect, and fraud cannot be tolerated in Minnesota.”

MINNESOTA ORCHESTRA TRIP TO CUBA – **[Deadline Wednesday]** The Minnesota Orchestra is going to play two concerts in Havana, Cuba, in mid-May. This is the first major orchestra to play in Cuba since President Obama called to relax the embargo. The Star Tribune wants to know, in your opinion: 1) in what ways does Minnesota benefit when its largest performing arts group makes this kind of historic trip; and 2) how does it make the Minnesota brand known in Cuba, and what does that do for Minnesota business, tourism, education, and state

government? How would you like us to respond? Deadline is Wednesday.

PRESS UPDATES

SECRETARY DUNCAN TRANSCRIPT – Attached is a transcript of Education Secretary Arne Duncan’s supportive comments regarding your universal pre-Kindergarten proposal. We sent this out to statewide media and our education newsletter list.

AGENCY UPDATES

PICKETING AT DHS FACILITIES – Today, DHS provided the following statement to media from Deputy Commissioner Anne Barry regarding the demonstrations held at Direct Care and Treatment facilities today marking Workers' Memorial Day:

“We are concerned about safety and want to continue to work with staff to make our programs safer for employees and clients. We respect employees’ right to express their opinion.”

MOOSE COLLARING ORDER – Today, the DNR received a number of media inquiries from outlets across the state following up on your executive order discontinuing the use of radio collars on moose. The agency issued the following statement from Commissioner Landwehr in response to media inquiries:

“I understand and empathize with those who were concerned by the unintended loss of moose in this study. We support the decision to end this phase of the research. Suspending new radio collaring on moose – both calf and adults – will eliminate the risk of unintended losses of individual moose. DNR will continue to analyze data from the remaining 100 collared adult moose to understand why the moose population continues to decline. This monitoring will continue for several more years through the lifetime of the radio collars. DNR is committed to using all the information from this study to advance the understanding of the decline and look for potential solutions.”

AVIAN FLU IN KENTUCKY – Today, the USDA confirmed the presence of highly pathogenic H5N2 avian influenza (HPAI) in two wild birds, a goose and a duck, in McCracken County, Kentucky. These birds were found within the Mississippi flyway where this strain of avian influenza has previously been identified.

MOVE MINNESOTA PRESS EVENTS – Today, Move Minnesota announce their plan to run radio ads highlighting the need to get a comprehensive transportation deal completed this year and critiquing the House transportation proposal passed last week. They also announced a series of press events in the Twin Cities, highlighting the need to invest in mass transit. Both press releases are attached.

NY TIMES SOMALI AUTISM ARTICLE – The New York Times contacted MDH today for a long-term story about the autism rates in the Somali community. The reporter plans to set up an interview with the agency next week.

HIV ANNUAL DATA REPORT – On Thursday, MDH plans to announce the number of HIV diagnoses in Minnesota increased by 2 percent last year, with 307 new cases reported in 2014 compared to 300 in 2013. The study also found that 86 percent of the new cases are in the Twin Cities area. People of color and men who have sex with men continue experience higher rates of infection than the rest of the state. An estimated 7,988 persons are living with HIV/AIDS in the state.

CHILD FOUND DRIVING ON I-35E – This morning, the State Patrol responded to 911 calls about a vehicle swerving erratically on I-35E northbound and on Highway 36. The troopers located the vehicle in Mounds View and found an eight-year-old boy driving. Also in the car were two other children, ages three and five. That morning, the children were concurrently reported missing from a foster family in St. Paul. The children have been placed with child protective services. St. Paul Police are investigating the incident.

NEWS CLIPS