



Mankato Area Hockey Association  
P.O. Box 1262  
Mankato, MN 56001

MARCH 16, 2015

Dear Legislator:

As **President for the Mankato Area Hockey Association** and our more than **370 youth hockey member families**, I write in strong support of **H.F. 1413, legislation extending the local sales tax for Mankato and North Mankato**. The extension of the sales tax would potentially allow the build-out of **recreational and facility infrastructure** that is so desperately needed in our communities, and **specifically two additional ice sheets**.

This facility would allow our association to adequately provide practices, games, and tournaments for our youth. MAHA currently has a 35% deficiency of its ice needs. Our players and parents travel to other communities for practice, games, and MAHA is not able to host our own tournaments due to this deficiency. Many of our 6<sup>th</sup> grade – 9<sup>th</sup> grade teams are practicing until 10:15 on school nights as this is the only time available. Given this shortage, there has been significant discussion of this need, but financial structure has long been the barrier to progress. The **local option sales tax extension** would help to address what is obviously the biggest obstacle in moving forward.

I would encourage your committee's support of H.F. 1413, the proposed legislation to extend our local option sales tax, as I believe this will provide not just opportunity for our youth but also the Greater Mankato community, through a partnership between the cities, non-profit youth organizations, and private investors. Our local economy is losing out on opportunities to provide tournament, league, and instructional play. By building these facilities, we would be able to pull individual users and teams from south central Minnesota and beyond, which renders economic development, and spreads some of the financial burden to users outside of the Greater Mankato area.

In reviewing the financial merits of extending the local option sales tax, please consider the impact that these facilities will have on the quality of life within the Greater Mankato Area and its residents. Better facilities helps retain families, and provide attractive features for our local business when recruiting professionals.

As you might conclude our board and member families are hopeful that your committee's support could help us to develop a plan that would allow a **local option sales tax extension** to be earmarked for the purpose of **recreational and sport facility development**. I hope that we can count on the committee's support so that we may move our community forward.

Thank you for your consideration,

Mike Steindl  
Mankato Area Hockey Association President