

Join us for Business DayS at the Capitol
By Doug Loon

The start of the legislative session is around the corner, and the activity promises to be fast paced. It's more important than ever to make your voices heard.

Join your peers for two Business DayS at the Capitol this year – double the opportunity to advance your priorities face-to-face with legislators. We've streamlined the agenda to fit your busy schedules and have narrowed the focus to two topics very important to the statewide business community.

Please mark your calendars: March 30 – transportation investment; April 20 – tax relief.

Our No. 1 priority overall is to reduce the statewide business property tax – the extra tax paid by businesses above and beyond what they send to local governments. Most onerous about this assessment is that it is a fixed cost and it is growing on auto pilot, increasing each year with an inflator index. All businesses pay this tax, whether they own or lease property, profitable or not. Reducing this tax will not affect what businesses pay to cities, schools and counties, and it will not shift any taxes to homeowners.

It's also time that Minnesota passes a 10-year plan that provides strategic and sustained investment in our roads, bridges and transit. The package must be comprehensive; needs must be addressed in metro and rural areas. We need a dependable transportation system that moves people and products efficiently and safely throughout the state. That requires regular investment in maintenance and strategic improvements. 2016 is the year to invest.

Both Business DayS at the Capitol will start with a luncheon and a moderated program to hear firsthand from key legislators on the status of these two priorities. Business leaders will then be bused to the Capitol for prearranged legislative appointments. The events will wind down with an informal reception to network and share information.

The projected state surplus is an excellent opportunity to invest in our economic and physical infrastructure. There is ample money to pass strategic business property tax relief and sustained transportation funding. Both investments are critical if we want to make Minnesota ready for the future.

Nothing makes a greater impact on legislators than hearing firsthand from their constituents. Register today for both Business Day(S) – [March 30](#) to push for transportation funding and [April 20](#) to advance business property tax relief.

I look forward to seeing you. Together, we will make Minnesota ready for change and ready to grow.

Doug Loon is president of the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce – www.mnchamber.com.