



Association of Minnesota Counties

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Gubernatorial Candidates Tim Walz and Jeff Johnson Address Minnesota County Officials, Staff in Alexandria

More than 200 county commissioners, other elected officials, and key staff from across Minnesota heard from gubernatorial candidates Hennepin County Commissioner Jeff Johnson and Congressman Tim Walz today during the Association of Minnesota Counties' (AMC) Fall Policy Conference in Alexandria.

"We were thrilled with the interactive exchange between county officials and the candidates," said AMC President Susan Morris, an Isanti County Commissioner. "With counties responsible for so many core services, it's imperative for the state and its local county partners to have a strong relationship."

AMC invited the two major party gubernatorial candidates to address attendees for 30 minutes each. Both candidates thanked county officials for their service and recognized the important role that counties play in providing a myriad of services to Minnesotans. Both Johnson and Walz also recognized the burdens of underfunded and unfunded mandates on local governments. The candidates also spoke of the importance of transparency and open lines of communication between local governments, the administration and other state government agencies.

Candidates answered questions on topics ranging from transportation funding and improving major state technology systems (MNLARS and METS), to how the state could include county voices in state-led rule making and about leading in a polarized political environment.

Julie Ring, AMC's Executive Director, noted that she appreciates that candidates understand the importance of engaging with local elected officials through AMC events, even though AMC does not issue political endorsements. AMC is a voluntary, non-partisan, statewide organization of which all 87 Minnesota counties are members.

AMC's legislative platform encompasses virtually all areas of county concern, including financing of human services programs, administration of jails, county board authority, funding for health and long term care services, economic development, affordable housing, agriculture policy, solid waste management, transportation financing, the county/state fiscal relationship and many other areas.

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Photo 1 Caption: (From left to right): AMC Executive Director Julie Ring and DFL gubernatorial candidate Congressman Tim Walz at the AMC Fall Policy Conference September 13 in Alexandria.



Photo 2 Caption: (From left to right): AMC President Susan Morris, an Isanti County Commissioner, and Republican gubernatorial candidate Jeff Johnson, a Hennepin County Commissioner, at the AMC Fall Policy Conference September 13 in Alexandria.