

**Chairman Hastings' Rule Statement for H.R. 5544, The Minnesota Education  
Investment & Employment Act**

Thank you Chairman Dreier and Ranking Member Slaughter for taking up H.R. 5544, a bill to implement a bipartisan plan that would uphold the promise made to Minnesota when it became a state to ensure funding for schools and education. I request a structured rule.

H.R. 5544, the Minnesota Education Investment & Employment Act, sponsored by Rep. Chip Cravaack, provides for a land exchange of Minnesota School Trust Lands for multiple-use National Forest Lands.

When Minnesota became a state, it retained a number of parcels of School Trust Lands that were specifically dedicated for sale and development to provide funding for Minnesota public schools.

However, when Congress designated the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness in 1978, a portion of these School Trust Lands became trapped inside the Wilderness area and inaccessible for economic development to benefit schools.

The land exchange in this bill would provide a much-needed solution by allowing the State to start putting land back to productive use for schools. Revenues from these lands will increase the school trust fund, which will increase funding for every school in the State. It will also create jobs and help grow the local economy.

The bill has local support and would execute the bipartisan state plan passed by the Minnesota legislature and signed by the Democrat Governor Mark Dayton.