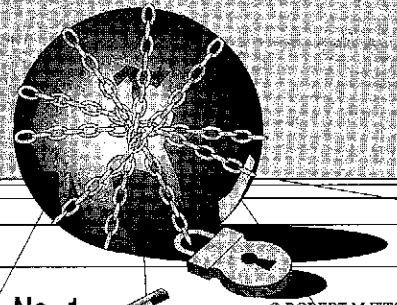


GROUND SWELL

A BI-MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF
COMMON GROUND USA



DECEMBER 2016-JANUARY 2017 / \$3.00

VOLUME 30, No. 1

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SIERRA CLUB JOINS THE FRAY IN MINNESOTA

By Rich Nymoen, St. Paul, MN

The Minnesota chapter (formerly the Twin Cities chapter) of Common Ground USA is excited to announce that the local Sierra Club chapter has put our Land Value Tax District bill on its legislative agenda. Because the Sierra Club's Connecticut chapter had helped pass LVT legislation there in 2013, Jacob Sutter (our former Secretary/Treasurer) had approached Sierra Club's "North Star" chapter in 2014 to see if they would be willing to do the same here. This started a conversation that has culminated in our current partnership.

Galen Ryan, of their Land Use and Transportation Committee, is their point person on this campaign. Rep. Jim Davnie, a Democrat, is the chief author of the bill in the House but because both chambers are now controlled by Republicans, we're hoping to make this a bi-partisan effort. To that end, we've decided to split the parties between us, with the Sierra Club responsible for approaching Democrats and us the Republicans.

We have put some numbers together to show how this tax shift would look in various Greater MN towns and hope this will be of interest to GOP legislators from those areas, especially when they learn that Pennsylvania small towns that adopted it saw increased business activity and tax reductions for most residents.

The legislature has its plate full this year because it has to pass a budget bill and a bonding bill, as well as address soaring ACA health insurance premiums. So we'll be lucky to even get a hearing on the bill this session. But hopefully we'll have enough conversations with legislators to set the stage for more progress on the legislation in coming years. Keep your fingers crossed.

(Common Ground USA Minnesota Chapter chairman Rich Nymoen may be emailed at rnymoen@aol.com)

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