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## NEWS RELEASE

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### **GOVERNOR PAWLENTY & MAYOR RYBAK MARK SECOND ANNIVERSARY OF I-35W BRIDGE COLLAPSE**

*~ Communities across Minnesota are encouraged to recognize a moment of silence at 6:05 p.m. on August 1; Governor Pawlenty orders flags to be flown at half staff ~*

**Minneapolis-Saint Paul** – Governor Tim Pawlenty and Mayor R.T. Rybak invite all Minnesotans to remember the victims, first responders, and all those affected by the collapse of the Interstate 35W Bridge by observing a moment of silence at 6:05 p.m. on Saturday, August 1, the second anniversary of the collapse.

In addition, Governor Pawlenty is issuing a proclamation declaring Saturday, August 1, 2009 as “Interstate 35W Bridge Memorial Day” in Minnesota and is ordering flags be flown at half-staff at the State Capitol Complex from sunrise to sunset that day.

“On that Wednesday night two years ago we witnessed a horrible tragedy, but we also saw a state pull together to help one another through some of our darkest moments,” Governor Pawlenty said. “We continue to keep the victims of the bridge collapse and their family members in our hearts and prayers.”

“The resounding Minnesota spirit that has carried us forward makes it hard to believe two years have passed since that tragic day,” said Mayor Rybak. “But not a day goes by that I don’t think about the 13 lives who were lost and their families. It’s also important to remember those who were on the bridge when it fell but survived the disaster – many who still struggle daily with both physical and emotional injuries as the result of the bridge collapse.”

Governor Pawlenty and Mayor Rybak unveiled a memorial design last year and are now in the process of personally recruiting leaders to serve on a fundraising committee, which will work to raise just over \$1 million to build the I-35W Bridge Remembrance Garden in Gold Medal Park.

The I-35W Bridge Remembrance Garden will be a tribute to the indomitable, supportive, and courageous spirit that was exhibited on that tragic day.

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Plans are underway to officially launch the fundraising effort later this fall once the fundraising committee is in place. To date, around \$200,000 has already been raised from corporations and individuals.

Those interested in learning more about the I-35W Bridge Remembrance Garden, viewing images of the design, or making a contribution can go to [www.35WRemembranceGarden.org](http://www.35WRemembranceGarden.org).

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