



Governor Ruth Ann Minner



January 24, 2008

To Members of the 144th General Assembly and to all Delawareans:

In compliance with 29 Del. C. Section 6342, I respectfully submit for your consideration the Fiscal Year 2009 Bond and Capital Improvements Act for the State of Delaware. The \$473.3 million in capital recommendations continues to build on the successes achieved during the Minner-Carney administration. This recommended financial plan invests in the vision I set forth early in this administration to improve public education, foster economic growth and to protect the health, well-being and quality of life of all Delawareans.

To reinforce my commitment to quality public education in Delaware, a total of \$132.7 million is recommended for public education construction in Fiscal Year 2009. These funds support ongoing projects in the Appoquinimink, Brandywine, Cape Henlopen, Capital, Caesar Rodney, Colonial, Lake Forest, Milford, Smyrna and Sussex Technical school districts, as well as the Sterck School for the Deaf.

My recommended financial plan targets a total of \$13.0 million to support economic development initiatives in Delaware. I am recommending a total of \$10.0 million through the Strategic Fund and the New Economy Initiative to attract and retain high quality businesses, to support fast-growing small businesses and to maintain a strong workforce foundation in Delaware. In addition, I am recommending a total of \$2.0 million for the Diamond State Port Corporation. In support of the third year of a five-year commitment to the Fraunhofer Center for Molecular Biotechnology, I am also recommending \$1.0 million for ongoing vaccine development efforts.

To build upon achieving a more Livable Delaware, I am recommending the continued earmark of \$20.0 million in dedicated revenue to support the Farmland Preservation program and the Open Space program. I am recommending \$3.2 million for Conservation Cost Share projects and an additional \$2.2 million to support beach preservation efforts. I am also recommending an additional \$1.0 million for the Clean Water State Grant Match which will leverage an additional \$5.0 million in federal funding to improve water treatment facilities statewide.

The health, safety and self-sufficiency of all Delawareans are of paramount importance to this administration. I am therefore recommending \$5.0 million to preserve the supply of low-income housing units for families in need. I am also recommending \$4.5 million to complete the enhancements to the state's 800 MHz emergency radio communications system and \$1.0 million for the planning of a new psychiatric facility at the Herman Holloway Campus of the Department of Health and Social Services. Finally, I am recommending \$8.5 million in support of libraries throughout the State.

This recommended financial plan is presented during a time of continued economic uncertainty. I am therefore presenting you with a plan that is both fiscally responsible and sustainable into the future. The recommended financial plan before you builds on the strong foundation that we have created during the Minner-Carney administration and directs funding toward the areas of highest priority in support of my vision for Delaware.

In cooperation with the members of the 144th General Assembly, I look forward to implementing my Fiscal Year 2009 Recommended Capital Budget.

Sincerely,

Ruth Ann Minner
Governor