

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2307

<http://coleman.senate.gov>

August 7, 2007

I-35 W Bridge Somali Response Committee
504 Cedar Avenue South
Minneapolis MN 55454

Dear Imams and Members of the I-35W Bridge Somali Response Committee:

I would like to express my most sincere gratitude for the thoughts and prayers on behalf of the I-35W Bridge victims that were expressed by your community to me in your letter on August 3rd, 2007.

The bridge collapse is a tragedy of historic proportions for the state of Minnesota. Like you, I am terribly saddened by the loss of fellow Minnesotans that resulted from this event. I understand that like many other communities in our state, the Somali community was directly touched by this tragedy through the terrible loss of Sadiya Sahal and her children. While this tragedy has brought grief to communities across our state, I am encouraged to see that from this common grief has emerged a unity among all Minnesotans to reach out to those directly affected by this tragedy in order to provide comfort and assistance. I am very proud of the actions that have been taken by Minnesota's first responders, as well as private citizens, to provide help to those involved in the collapse. I have pledged to do everything in my power as a United States Senator in order to facilitate an investigation into the cause for the collapse, ensure the rapid reconstruction of a safe bridge, and provide support to the families that have lost loved ones in this tragic event.

I was very encouraged by your kind words of support, which I view as another example of the very positive working relationship that I am pleased to share with the Somali Community of Minnesota. I am proud to represent the vibrant Somali community of Minnesota and have strived to be a voice for you in Washington. I believe your community has made important contributions to enriching the fabric of the state of Minnesota, including through the expression of compassion on behalf of fellow Minnesotans. I would also like to express my deepest sorrow for the family and community of Sadiya Sahal, who I understand was expecting her second child shortly and was accompanied by her two-year-old daughter Hanah Mohamed when the tragedy occurred last week. I know that Sadiya was loved by the community and will be greatly missed, as demonstrated by the words and prayers communicated by the Imams. I am very sorry that due to a previous commitment, I will not be available to attend your Friday prayer service for all the victims of the bridge collapse, but I will make sure to have a representative attend in my place.

Once again, I would like to thank you for your leadership and service to the Somali Community and all of Minnesota. I hope to continue to work with you on issues affecting your loved ones in Minnesota and Somalia as well.

Sincerely,



Norm Coleman
United States Senator

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