[Somali Greeting]

Greetings of peace.

I am Kassim Busuri and I am honored to serve the residents of Ward 6 as their representative on the Saint Paul City Council.

Ward 6 is a geographic area bounded generally by Larpenteur, McKnight, Seventh, and Edgerton. It comprises slightly less than half of Saint Paul’s East Side and contains many different neighborhoods, such as Hazel Park, Hayden Heights, Payne-Phalen, Phalen Park Heights, Prosperity, Railroad Island, and a portion of Dayton’s Bluff.

Ward 6 has a rich history of being home to waves of immigrants: Danes, English, Irish, Italians, Finns, Germans, Mexicans, Norwegians, Poles, Swedes, and more. That wave of immigration continues today with other people groups, such as Hmong, Karen, Vietnamese, and of course, Somali. Many of these newest Americans have worked hard to carve out a life for themselves in the foundries and factories on the East Side. Others have started shops and restaurants that made our commercial strips; Arcade, Payne, White Bear, Maryland, and Seventh a vibrant, thriving part of our community.

Today our community faces many challenges. We need to ensure that the future of our community, our youth, receive a top quality education that prepares them for the technology of today and tomorrow. We need our residents to have access to good, living-wage jobs so they can meet all their family’s needs with dignity. We need supportive, community-oriented, and diverse police officers whose desire is to truly protect and serve, and we need elected officials at every level who listen to their constituents and have a heart to be public servants.

I plan to use my time on the Council to create equality of opportunities for all our residents by promoting new businesses, housing choices, and healthy activities in our parks and our recreation centers. No person can succeed in this alone. I value your input and need your ideas on what I can do to make Ward 6 a more welcoming, economically viable, place that attracts new residents and visitors alike.

[Somali Goodbye]

I leave you with greetings of peace.