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A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Betty McCollum" with "MN 4th" written below it.

**Congresswoman Betty McCollum
Statement for the Record**

***Honoring Joe Dowling on the occasion of his retirement from the Guthrie Theater
June 2, 2015***

Ms. McCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Mr. Joe Dowling, who is retiring in June from the Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis, Minnesota after serving 20 distinguished years as Artistic Director. During Mr. Dowling's impressive tenure, he has directed more than 50 shows and reinforced the foundation for this world-class Minnesota cultural cornerstone.

Mr. Dowling joined the Guthrie as Artistic Director in 1995, bringing his ceaseless creativity and tireless dedication to the arts after leading other theater companies in his native Ireland. Among Mr. Dowling's many achievements is the development of training programs like the University of Minnesota/Guthrie Theater B.F.A. Actor Training Program and A Guthrie Experience for Actors in Training. He also solidified a partnership with The Acting Company of New York and created the WorldStage Series, two programs that allow local talent to tour the U.S. and in turn welcome internationally renowned theater programs to Minnesota. He has also shared his vision and talents on Broadway and at other prominent venues throughout the United States and Europe.

Perhaps Mr. Dowling's deepest legacy is the success of a \$125 million capital campaign and construction of a new theater home which was completed in 2006. Designed by French architect Jean Nouvel, the theater is an architectural gem. At 285,000 square feet, the new Guthrie includes public gathering spaces and restaurants, and a 178-foot "endless bridge" that highlights a spectacular, soaring view of the mighty Mississippi River. At the heart of the new Guthrie are three unique theaters offering special performance spaces and viewing perspectives. The Dowling Studio in particular is an intimate 200 person black box theater that has welcomed 33 local acting companies and stands as a testament to its namesake's commitment to developing and showcasing the Twin Cities arts community.

In a metropolitan area that boasts more theater seats per capita than anywhere else in the U.S. outside of New York, Minnesotans take great pride in our thriving, high quality performing arts community. Experiencing a performance at the Guthrie is a particular joy, and I attend shows there whenever I can. I am clearly not alone, because under Dowling's leadership, the Guthrie entertains, enriches and enlightens 400,000 patrons each year.

Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to rise to honor Mr. Dowling and his many contributions to the rich cultural landscape in Minnesota as the Guthrie Theater's Artistic Director as well as his lifetime of commitment to the arts.