



The Honorable Timothy Walz
Governor, State of Minnesota
130 State Capitol
St. Paul, MN 55155

The Honorable Margaret Anderson Kelliher
Commissioner, Minnesota Department of Transportation
395 John Ireland Blvd
St. Paul, MN 55155

November 8, 2021

Dear Governor Walz and Commissioner Anderson Kelliher:

We write to you today in support of America's #1 shovel-ready rail project, the Northern Lights Express (NLX), a passenger rail project connecting the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul with the Port Cities of Duluth and Superior.

In 2019, Amtrak's Joe McHugh, vice president of state-supported services, praised the years of work done on the project, and called it "one of the most shovel-ready projects in the nation."

The NLX project has long been supported by cities, counties, a tribal nation, businesses and industry, and many other stakeholders along the rail corridor from Minneapolis to Duluth and Superior. The working women and men of the Minnesota Building and Construction Trades Council are pleased to offer our support to this great project.

After nearly two decades of visioning, this project is ready to go. Soon, with the passage of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021, billions of dollars will be available to complete intercity passenger rail projects like the Northern Lights Express. We urge the Walz Administration and the Minnesota Department of Transportation to act quickly in seeking these federal funds and developing a 5-year plan to complete this project.

The NLX project in Minnesota and Wisconsin is ready to go. We are ready to put men and women in the trades to work on the project and we are ready to begin moving people and product throughout the rail corridor. This passenger rail line will connect students to colleges and universities. This rail line will connect thousands of veterans from northern Minnesota and Wisconsin with V.A. healthcare. This will be a connection for tourists and business commuters.

In the words of President Biden, "support for rail travel goes beyond the emotional connection. With delays at our airports and congestion on our roads becoming increasingly ubiquitous, volatile fuel prices, increased environmental awareness, and a need for transportation links between growing communities, rail travel is more important to America than ever before."

We urge you to make this rail project a priority in the next Legislative session and work aggressively to seek these new federal rail dollars once they become available.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,



Tom Dicklich
Executive Director