

AMY KLOBUCHAR  
MINNESOTA

COMMITTEES:  
AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION,  
AND FORESTRY  
COMMERCE, SCIENCE,  
AND TRANSPORTATION  
JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE  
JUDICIARY  
RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

December 4, 2017

Secretary Elaine L. Chao  
U.S. Secretary of Transportation  
United States Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue S.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20950

Re: Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Program, Northern Lights Express (NLX) Passenger Rail

Dear Secretary Chao:

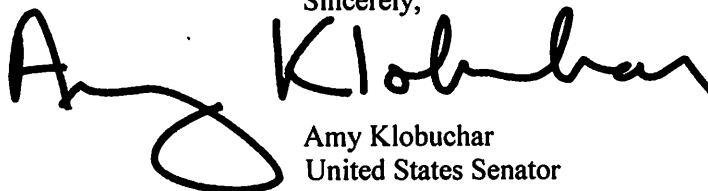
I am writing in support of the NLX Passenger Rail Project's application for funding through the U.S. Department of Transportation's TIGER Grant Program. This application was submitted in partnership with the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MNDOT) by the St. Louis and Lake Counties Regional Railroad Authority (Rail Authority). This grant would help support the NLX, a pragmatic and soundly developed passenger rail project in an existing freight rail corridor between two crucial Minnesota communities, Duluth and the Twin Cities.

The Rail Authority has been diligently working with the Minneapolis-Duluth/Superior Passenger Rail Alliance, the Federal Railroad Administration, MNDOT, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, and BNSF Railway to develop passenger service on this corridor. The project has completed the TIER 2 environmental assessment and has completed preliminary engineering. The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) has also identified the NLX as an important priority project in the 2015 State Rail Plan.

The funding from the TIGER grant would help with safety improvements for fourteen existing railroad crossings on the NLX corridor. These improvements are necessary to operate passenger trains traveling faster than 79 mph. NLX would operate at a top speed of 90 mph throughout most of the route. Most importantly, these crossing improvements would significantly improve the safety for our rural residents along this corridor, whom experience high levels of freight movement in the region. There is strong support in our communities for enhanced rail safety as the public has experienced a rapid rise in freight transportation, especially the transportation of fuel and hazardous items.

I support the Northern Lights Express's application for funding through the TIGER Grant. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Rommel Lee in my Minnesota office at 612-727-5220 or by email at [Rommel\\_Lee@Klobuchar.senate.gov](mailto:Rommel_Lee@Klobuchar.senate.gov).

Sincerely,



Amy Klobuchar  
United States Senator

RICHARD M. NOLAN  
8TH DISTRICT, MINNESOTA



WASHINGTON OFFICE  
2366 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515  
(202) 225-6211

NOLAN.HOUSE.GOV  
FACEBOOK.COM/USREPRICKNOLAN  
TWITTER.COM/USREPRICKNOLAN

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE  
RANKING MEMBER, GENERAL FARM COMMODITIES  
AND RISK MANAGEMENT  
CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND  
INFRASTRUCTURE  
AVIATION  
HIGHWAYS AND TRANSIT  
RAILROADS, PIPELINES, AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-2308**  
December 12, 2017

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao  
Secretary of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Chao,

I am writing in support of the Northern Lights Express (NLX)'s application to the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) program.

As a high-speed rail transit provider, the NLX will provide several benefits and a positive return on investment to the State of Minnesota. Specifically, the project will create approximately 3,100 jobs annually during construction, 380 jobs annually during the first five years of operation in addition to improving and encouraging existing and new businesses along the corridor. Furthermore, the NLX will boost tourism revenues of \$378 million, which will support 10,600 jobs, and wages of \$233 million over a 40-year period. The addition of the NLX will increase property values along the corridor and provide more incentive for real estate and business investment in rural communities that are in need of an economic enhancement.

From an environmental sustainability standpoint, the NLX is dedicated to developing and utilizing equipment that preserves air quality and is fuel efficient, which will ultimately reduce any environmental impact on habitats and water resources. Considering the NLX will cause a shift from transport by automobile to train travel, this project would reduce Carbon emissions resulting in a saving of an estimated \$47 million.

Lastly, the NLX will provide an enormous benefit to our Nation's Freight economy and operations. Explicitly, it will deliver greater mobility and proficient Regional access for business people and communities, improve the efficiency of logistics for shippers, and enhance the safety and reliability of freight via rail. In addition, the NLX plans to invest in grade crossing improvements, which is a major safety and quality of life issue in the Midwest Region. This investment will boost safety at rail grade crossings, which will lessen road and freight congestion, and reduce crashes for both trains and automobiles by up to 130 crashes over 40 years.

I urge for your consideration of this important, shovel-ready project that will create thousands of good paying jobs, boost tourism and revitalize rural and urban communities.

DULUTH OFFICE  
11 EAST SUPERIOR STREET, SUITE 125  
DULUTH, MN 55802  
PHONE: (218) 464-5095

BRAINERD OFFICE  
501 LAUREL STREET  
BRAINERD, MN 56401  
PHONE: (218) 454-4078

CENTER CITY OFFICE  
313 N MAIN ST., ROOM 174  
CENTER CITY, MN 55012  
PHONE: (218) 491-3131

CHISHOLM OFFICE  
316 WEST LAKE STREET #7  
CHISHOLM, MN 55719  
PHONE: (218) 491-3114

Thank you for your attention to this matter; I look forward to hearing back from you. If you have any questions please contact my Legislative Assistant Eddie Wytkind at 202-225-6211 or [Eddie.Wytkind@mail.house.gov](mailto:Eddie.Wytkind@mail.house.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rich Nolan", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Richard M. Nolan  
Member of Congress