



March 29, 2023

**Dear Senate Majority Leader Kari Dziedzic,
Speaker of the House Melissa Hortman,
and members of the Minnesota State Legislature:**

Thank you for your leadership to better the lives of all Minnesotans and especially for the necessary step you took to move Minnesota to 100% Clean Energy by 2040. As clergy and faith leaders representing congregations across Minnesota, we urge our state elected officials to take the next necessary climate action and pass robust Transit Funding for the Metro and Greater Minnesota.

As leaders in our communities of faith across Minnesota, we believe all people - Black, white and Brown, indigenous, new-comer and long time resident, in cities, suburbs and greater Minnesota - deserve to thrive with clean air, clean water, and the freedom to move safely and reliably throughout and across our communities. Our faith traditions and sacred texts call us to care for the earth and all its inhabitants.

But the fossil fuel companies and the politicians beholden to them have traded our air, our water, and our ability to live and thrive on this planet for their own profit. They fight against every attempt to address climate change or safeguard the air we breathe and the water we drink. If they get their way, the world we leave our children will be one careening off the cliff of ecological and societal collapse.

A habitable planet for our children and grandchildren to flourish on demands we transform every sector of our economy this decade. We've taken a big and necessary step to transform our energy system. But Minnesota can not afford to let this moment pass without transforming our transportation system.

Transportation is Minnesota's biggest source of carbon emissions. And we know that climate justice requires building a world-class transit system that is fast, frequent, reliable, safe, and gets people to everywhere they need and want to go. Building out transit (and walking and biking) infrastructure will also serve to make Minnesota a healthier and more equitable place and address past injustices in the transportation system. Highways were built through historically Black neighborhoods, dividing communities and putting the most pollution in BIPOC and low-income neighborhoods. A transit system that meets everyone's needs will clean up our air and especially ensure low-income and transit reliant Minnesotans the freedom to move.

Ten years ago the legislature attempted a big transportation package and failed to deliver. We cannot afford to wait another ten years. The climate emergency is here. And racial and economic justice demand a transportation system that works for all of us. This is our year.

We urge you to pass a 1% Metro Sales Tax to build and operate a full Transit system across the 7-county metro, and invest at least 200 million to build transit in greater Minnesota.

Signed By:

Pastor Chrissie Carver, The Potter's House Apostolic Ministry
Pastor Jay Steele, Open Circle Church of the Brethren
Reverend Harry J. Bury PhD, Twin Cities Nonviolent,
Rev. Chris McArdle, First Congregational Church UCC of Anoka, MN
Rabbi Emma Kippley-Ogman
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Rev. Jen Nagel, Lead Pastor, University Lutheran Church of Hope
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The Rev. Lydia Huttar Brown
Rev Fernando Ortega, Ss. Cyril & Methodius Church
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Rev. Lauren Baske Davis, First UCC Northfield
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Rev. Rick King, Falcon Heights United Church of Christ
Rev. Rory Philstrom, Christ the King Lutheran Church, Bloomington
Grant Stevensen, Our Saviour's Lutheran Church
The Rev. Dr. Paula B Nordhem, United Church of Christ
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Rev. Jen Rome, Pilgrim Lutheran Church, St. Paul
Rev. David Landt, Mills Church, Minnetonka
Rev. Hans Jorgensen, St Timothy Lutheran Church
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Rev. Sarah Campbell, Mayflower United Church of Christ
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