

100%

100% Campaign  
705 Raymond Ave. - Suite 100  
Saint Paul, MN 55114  
[www.100percentmn.org](http://www.100percentmn.org)

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Chair Hornstein and Members of the Committee,

We are writing to express our support for the three-quarter cent metropolitan region sales and use tax in Rep. Hornstein's House File 2346, as amended in the DE3.

Minnesota is transitioning to a cleaner, more equitable economy. This transition is creating many opportunities to improve the lives of Minnesotans. Some of the most important are the changes we're making to our transportation system. **Transportation is how we stay connected.** It's how we get to school, work, and shopping. It's how we go on vacation and get to 'away' games with the people we love. **Minnesotans need more and cleaner options for staying connected.** This means electrified vehicles for driving, the ability to walk, bike, or roll safely, and the option to take accessible, affordable, and welcoming transit, in every part of the state.

To get to this vision: a better connected and cleaner Minnesota, where everyone has safe, affordable, and efficient options, we need new, dedicated, and at-scale revenue.

**A metro area sales tax dedicated to transit needs to be at the center of a comprehensive revenue package that invests in our statewide transportation system.**

Minnesotans need more and cleaner transportation options. To get them, **we need at-scale revenue.** According to the estimates the Minnesota Department of Transportation has shared with the legislature this year, we have a \$19 billion to \$27 billion gap between the agency's revenue and the state's needs. To help close this gap, we need at least \$1 billion per year to fix what we have and meet our state's existing transportation goals. The cost of the system we need, one with readily available, cleaner transit, safe streets, and maintained roads, is at least \$1.5 billion per year.

**We need new, dedicated revenue.** The state's historic surplus should play a role in closing this gap. However, our transportation needs are ongoing and structural. Insufficient dedicated funding limits long term investments; it also limits long-term planning capacity, which leaves Minnesota less ready to take advantage of limited-time funding opportunities when they arise. In particular, transit operations, active transportation, and system maintenance require more (and dedicated) sources. These will need to include new and strengthened sources where we all pitch in to pay for the transportation system we all use.

**We need to off-set the revenue with progressive investments.** We urge the committee to get creative about how to off-set the more broad-based revenue sources with investments that will lower transportation costs for everyday Minnesotans. This must start with making transit and active transportation options more available, and more affordable, for people in every part of the

state. Second, the committee should look for opportunities to adjust existing revenue sources to make them more progressive. Third, the overall solution must include investments that put new technologies, like electric vehicles, e-bikes, etc., within the reach of every family who wants to use them. Finally, the legislature should balance these revenue sources with family-supporting, non-transportation-related investments like the Working Family Credit, the Renters Credit, the Climate Action Tax Credit, etc.

A comprehensive approach to a cleaner, more affordable, more equitable transportation system is long overdue. Please do not miss the opportunity to act this year to invest in this system that we all use and we all need.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

*Aurora Vautrin*

**Aurora Vautrin**  
Legislative Director  
100% Campaign  
705 Raymond Ave. - Suite 100  
Saint Paul, MN 55114