



MN House Transportation Finance and Policy Committee
Chair Jon Koznick
Minnesota House of Representatives
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Koznick and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Minnesota Building and Construction Trades Council and the thousands of skilled union tradespeople we represent across the state, I am writing to express our strong opposition to House File 1167, which seeks to prohibit expenditures for the Northern Lights Express (NLX) passenger rail project. The NLX represents an opportunity to invest in Minnesota's transportation infrastructure while creating good-paying jobs, supporting workforce development, and strengthening our economy.

Minnesota must remain competitive by investing in forward-thinking infrastructure projects like NLX, which will provide economic opportunities for working families and improve connectivity between the Twin Cities and Greater Minnesota. Prohibiting expenditures for this critical project would not only hinder economic progress but would also turn away much-needed federal investment in our state's transportation network.

The Northern Lights Express will generate thousands of construction jobs for union workers in multiple trades, supporting local economies along the rail corridor. Specifically, the project will:

- **Create High-Quality Union Jobs** – The NLX will provide thousands of jobs in construction, operations, and maintenance, offering family-sustaining wages and benefits.
- **Support Apprenticeship and Training Programs** – Major infrastructure projects like NLX provide vital training opportunities for Minnesota's next generation of skilled workers, ensuring a strong and prepared workforce for the future.
- **Boost Local and Statewide Economies** – Increased transportation access will help businesses attract workers, drive tourism, and generate long-term economic activity.

The NLX is not just an economic opportunity—it is a necessary transportation investment that will:

- Reduce congestion and improve safety along I-35 by providing a reliable alternative to driving.
- Lower emissions and support Minnesota's sustainability goals by reducing vehicle miles traveled.
- Expand access to jobs, education, and services for residents in Greater Minnesota who rely on public transportation.



The federal government is prioritizing passenger rail investment, providing a unique opportunity for Minnesota to secure significant funding for this project. By prohibiting state expenditures, HF 1167 would put Minnesota at a disadvantage, leaving federal dollars on the table while other states move forward with modernized infrastructure.

The Minnesota Building and Construction Trades Council urges you to **oppose HF 1167** and support the Northern Lights Express as a necessary investment in our workforce, economy, and transportation future. This project will create thousands of jobs, improve mobility, and ensure that Minnesota remains a leader in infrastructure innovation.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We appreciate your leadership on transportation policy and your commitment to Minnesota's working families.

Sincerely,

Tom Dicklich

Executive Director

Minnesota Building and Construction Trades Council