

March 6, 2026

Dear Chairs Koznick and Tabke and Members of the House Transportation Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on HF3728 regarding trunk highway maintenance and expansion.

We appreciate the need to focus limited highway dollars on maintaining our current highway system in a state of good repair. Public assets need to be preserved and maintained and we know that MnDOT's 20-year State Highway Investment Plan (MnSHIP) is fiscally constrained with a plan to spend \$22.45 billion of the expected \$36.7 billion or 61% of total revenues on maintenance and preservation of the existing system. Only \$1.2 billion or about 3.3% of total revenues over the next 20 years are slated to be spent on highway mobility projects that would add capacity.

While system preservation is important, other needs cannot be ignored. Some expansion of the highway system is necessary in areas with high crash rates and in areas where businesses and economic growth require improved highways. In addition to highway mobility, the MnSHIP plan will spend \$1.2 billion on pedestrian and bicycle projects and \$1.3 billion on safety improvements.

Safety is a critical concern for our members and the ability to address intersections or segments with high crash rates through increased capacity is an important strategy that we believe should not be limited. We have seen the impact on safety of highway capacity expansion projects like widening TH14, where the expansion from North Mankato to Nicollet dropped Highway 14 from a fatal and serious crash rate of more than three times the statewide average to a rate that is comfortably below the statewide average.

Similar safety improvements have been seen in the TH23 corridor between Marshall and St. Cloud in addition to the safety and mobility improvements that have been documented by adding new interchanges in areas where traffic had been forced to weave or stop at traffic signals throughout the metro area.

The new Highway 212 project in Carver County enhances safety by expanding 5.5 miles of two-lane undivided highway into a four-lane divided expressway between Norwood Young America and Cologne. Completed Reduced Conflict Interchange projects in this corridor have shown a 50% reduction in injury crashes and a 100% reduction in fatal/serious injury right-angle crashes. The project specifically targets a dangerous stretch of road where three people died at the County Road 51 intersection in the past 5 years.

Underfunding of our highway system continues to be a chronic issue. With limited funds, MnDOT needs to balance important needs for safety, mobility, economic growth and maintenance of the system. We believe the Department has worked well with community leaders, elected officials, local governments and the transportation industry to balance these needs. We have concerns about legislation that would limit the ability to move ahead with needed capacity expansion in areas with very real safety problems.

Thank you for your consideration,

Associated General Contractors of Minnesota
Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities
International Union of Operating Engineers, Local 49
LIUNA Minnesota and North Dakota
Minnesota County Engineers Association
Minnesota Inter-County Association
Minnesota Transportation Alliance
Minnesota State Building Trades
Northern Midwest Regional Council of Carpenters