

I am writing to you regarding elimination state appropriation funding to the Minnesota Geological Survey (MGS) through the Senate Higher Education companion Bill SF 2483. Even though House Bill HF2431 does not include the same elimination of funds, I thought it important that Ways and Means hearing understand the impact of this reduction. The state appropriation accounts for approximately thirty percent of the MGS annual operating budget, and over half of the base budget. The remaining operating budget is directed towards the County Geologic Atlas (CGA) Program and comes from state and federally funded programs including the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund, Clean Water Land and Legacy Fund, and USGS STATEMAP and EarthMRI funding. These funds do not allow for base funding expenses critical for the CGA Program to run, including equipment costs, overhead, laboratory supplies, computers and peripherals. A funding cut to the base budget of the MGS will significantly compromise our ability to provide foundational support for state and local programs that use CGA maps and databases.

In addition to base-funding expenses, the state appropriation is used to support work outside of the CGA program that directly impacts ongoing programs within state agencies and local units of government, such as MPCA Remediation, DNR Ecological and Water Resources and Land and Minerals Divisions, MDH Well Management, Water Policy and Drinking Water Sections of the Environmental Health Division, MDA Pesticide and Fertilizer Division, County SWCDs and regional environmental health programs. MGS information is also widely used in the private sector that deals with water and mineral resources. Specific examples include:

- Investigations of geologic controls on groundwater contaminant transport, including nitrate and PFAS.
- Borehole logging for state agencies to assist with water well construction and abandonment.
- Well construction variances.
- Aquifer and aquitard properties.
- Yield estimations for groundwater appropriations.
- Contaminated site characterization and remediation.
- maintenance of the state water well database, Minnesota County Well Index, containing records for over 590,000 private and public drinking water wells, along with geologic interpretations for wells as part of MGS mapping projects.

#### *What is at stake?*

- Ongoing, unbiased geologic mapping and database compilation to assist with Minnesota water quality and quantity assessment:
  - Extent of nitrate, PFAS or other contaminants by aquifer – which aquifers are impacted, and which ones are not?
  - Potential impact of high-capacity pumping on groundwater quantity, including data centers – which aquifers are impacted, and which ones are not?
- Ongoing, unbiased geologic mapping and database compilation to assist with Minnesota aggregate and critical mineral assessment
  - What is the extent of Minnesota's aggregate and critical mineral endowment?

#### *Why the University of Minnesota?*

By design, the Minnesota Geological Survey (MGS) was established by the state at the University of Minnesota, so it could provide an unbiased assessment of Minnesota's rocks, minerals and water resources. MGS is a non-regulatory unit that provides the "playing field" under our feet that all state programs use for all aspects of land water and mineral resources management. No other state entity does this.

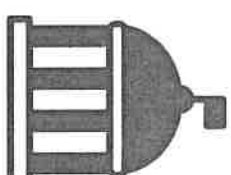
Respectfully submitted, Robert Tipping, Director – Minnesota Geological Survey





## DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

- Groundwater appropriation permits
- Pollution sensitivity mapping
- Groundwater level network
- Aggregate and mineral assessments
- Groundwater chemistry mapping



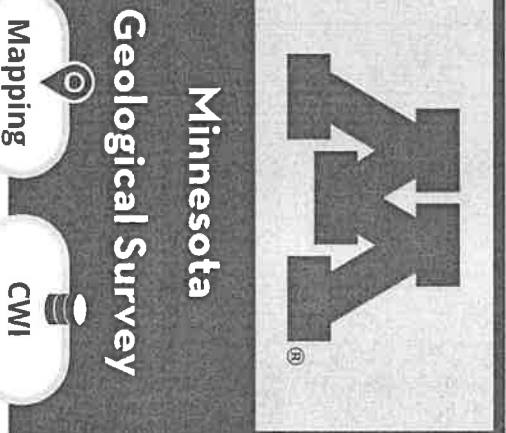
## Local Government Units

- Rural Water Systems
- Delegated well programs
- Local water plans through Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR)



## MINNESOTA POLLUTION CONTROL AGENCY

- Contamination/remediation, site management
- Groundwater quality monitoring
- Feedlot Program
- Subsurface Sewage Treatment Systems



## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

- Groundwater quality monitoring
- Groundwater Protection Rule
- Township Testing Program
- Contamination/remediation, site assessment



## Private Industry

- Environmental Consulting
- Well Contractors
- Geothermal
- Mining – aggregate and critical minerals

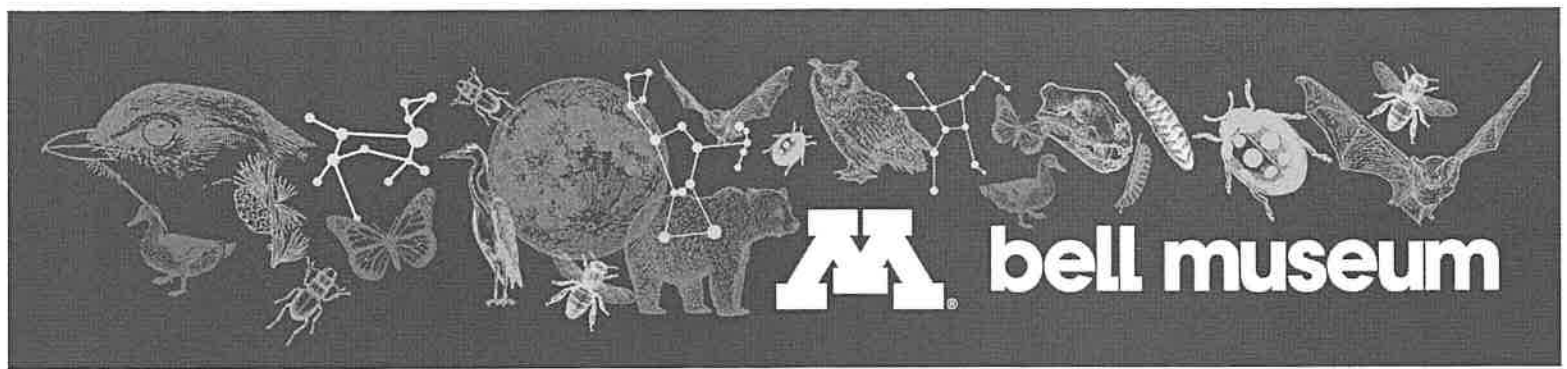


## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

- Well Management – well construction code
- Water Policy Center – nitrate response and private wells
- Drinking Water Protection – Public Water Supply water quality
- Source Water Protection – drinking water monitoring and wellhead protection

*Without Minnesota Geological Survey (MGS) mapping and database inputs through CWI, these groups lose the geologic foundation supporting their programs and businesses.*





Phone: (612) 625-6889 | <https://www.bellmuseum.umn.edu/>

## State Support for Minnesota's Natural History Collections

The Bell Museum was established as **Minnesota's official natural history museum** by a state legislative mandate in 1872 to collect, preserve, display, and interpret Minnesota's diverse animal and plant life for scholarly research and teaching, and for public appreciation, enrichment, and enjoyment.

Established **by state law**, the Bell Museum today is Minnesota's official repository for biological collections including birds, mammals, fishes, reptiles, amphibians, mollusks, plants, fungi, and lichens.

The Bell Museum stewards over **1.2 million plant and animal specimens** that represent **every county in Minnesota** and locales around the globe. Our collections form the basis of knowledge of Minnesota's biodiversity, serve as an important resource for **scholarly and applied research**, and enhance formal and informal **science education**.

The Bell's biological collections **serve state agencies** including the Departments of Natural Resources, Transportation, Public Safety, Agriculture, Health, and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. Local businesses in the natural resource sector, from environmental impact assessment to landscape architecture, rely on these resources.

Biological collections require ongoing care to maintain their **utility and accessibility**. The Bell Museum is committed to expanding access to this critical state resource and has invested significant effort to digitize specimens and collection records, making collections publicly available online.

The state's annual investment in the Bell Museum supports **curation and accessibility** of the Bell's biological collections – namely through the support of key personnel including collections managers and curatorial assistants. The Bell Museum has responsibly stewarded this annual investment for over five decades in service to the state. We're bringing biological collections into the twenty-first century as we increase the accessibility and availability of specimens and extend their utility for research and natural resource management through DNA sequencing and 3D-imaging.

**State support has not kept pace with collections operating costs. The loss of dedicated state funding will significantly impact operations and hinder delivery of our statutory obligation.** Reduced staffing would delay service to state agencies and reduce access to this important statewide resource. It will limit growth of the collection at a time when it is needed more than ever to understand environmental change and address challenges including wildlife disease, invasive species, biodiversity loss, ecosystem health, and air and water quality.

Holly Menninger, PhD | Executive Director  
[hmenninger@umn.edu](mailto:hmenninger@umn.edu) | 612-625-6889





Re: HF 2438 – House Transportation Budget Omnibus

April 22, 2025

Dear Co-Chair Stephenson, Co-Chair Torkelson and Members of the House Ways & Means Committee:

ISAIAH is a multi-racial, statewide, nonpartisan coalition of faith communities and other community groups working toward racial, economic, and climate justice.

No matter where we live or what we look like, all Minnesotans deserve access to safe transportation options and a liveable future. Unfortunately, this bill moves us backwards in two key areas.

First, cuts to transit. These cuts – including \$12M to greater MN, and zeroing out general fund support for transit operations in the metro – will hurt people, including seniors and students who depend on it for getting around every day.

Even more alarming is the unnecessary rollback of a significant policy innovation, the greenhouse gas mitigation program.

Article 2, Section 7 of the DE delays this important program - which has already been in effect – by 3 ½ years. This is a completely unnecessary policy provision that has no bearing on the budget and does not belong in this bill.

Transportation is the leading sector of greenhouse gas emissions. Climate change is real, and urgent. We all see the effects. From snowless winters, to smoke-filled summers it is impacting every corner of our state.

Climate change is also costly. Just yesterday the New York Times reported that by 2049, costs from the effects of climate change could total more than **\$38 trillion – every year**.

The greenhouse gas emissions impact assessment that is being delayed will not save money, nor will it save jobs. Instead, it will further delay much-needed investments in transit and other resilient infrastructure.

Especially in a time of enormous chaos, cuts and cruelty coming from the Trump Musk regime, we cannot afford to maintain the status quo. This is literally fiddling while Rome, or closer to home - Los Angeles - burns. We urge you to strip out this unnecessary, backwards delay. Failing that, we urge you to vote no on this bill.

Sincerely,

Lars Negstad







395 John Ireland Boulevard  
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

April 23, 2025

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The Honorable Zack Stephenson  
Chair  
House Ways & Means Committee  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Centennial Office Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155

The Honorable Paul Torkelson  
Chair  
House Ways & Means Committee  
5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Centennial Office Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Torkelson and Chair Stephenson,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on House File 2438, the omnibus transportation bill. I appreciate the work legislators and staff have done over the course of this session to assemble this legislation. This bill provides important investments to help construct, operate and maintain Minnesota's transportation system in challenging times.

On behalf of the Minnesota Department of Transportation, thank you for including several MnDOT initiatives in the omnibus bill. Additional funding for state road construction and the Blatnik Bridge project will result in a greatly improved transportation system, better pavements and safer bridges. Authorizing a funding partnership with the Metropolitan Council on the F Line/Highway 65 project will allow MnDOT to make numerous safety improvements in that corridor. Not only would this approach minimize disruption to communities and the traveling public, but the project design, communication, and construction will be significantly more efficient than building two separate projects.

There are a few items I would like to highlight as concerns.

- The aims of the project portal requirements to enhance transparency and accountability are also goals the department shares. As identified in the fiscal note, this effort would require a significant amount of work and several new staff. MnDOT's program is constantly shifting because of funding changes, project changes, and priority changes like state and federal legislative directives. Trying to link all these activities under the portal will be challenging. The department has significant amounts of information available on our website, but we know we can always do a better job of communicating with the public. We are working towards a live Statewide Transportation Improvement Program that will make MnDOT's capital program more easily accessible and transparent on our website. Our 10-year Capital Highway Investment Plan is already available online with an interactive map to view projects under development. We also have a legislatively mandated project selection website with information about which projects are moving forward, as well as which projects were not selected and why. I look forward to working with this committee to ensure that information around transportation projects continues to be more transparent, efficient, and accessible.

- The \$8.94M cut to passenger rail limits our ability to support Borealis service from St. Paul to Red Wing, Winona, and points beyond to Milwaukee and Chicago. Ridership on this line has exceeded expectations and we want to continue to remain strong partners with the states of Wisconsin and Illinois on supporting this service.
- The proposed delay in implementation of greenhouse gas and vehicle miles traveled requirements is concerning. Transportation is the leading sector of GHG emissions in Minnesota and we need to start thinking differently as we plan expansion projects. The legislation enacted in 2023 creates accountability to directly mitigate or offset increased emissions from highway expansion. Delaying these requirements would remove the most meaningful mechanism for accountability on transportation emissions reduction in Minnesota. It would put responsibility for GHG reduction on individuals and it removes accountability for state and local governments, despite governments being directly responsible for delivering transportation options and making land use decisions. I do appreciate your efforts to identify a funding source for the mitigation account.
- Meeting the proposed targets for the asset sustainability ratio would result in a substantial change to our construction program. Approximately \$175-\$240 million annually would need to be shifted to pavement projects to meet these requirements. The eight-year total impact is between \$1.4 billion to \$1.9 billion. It would require removing non-pavement projects from our program that in some cases have already been scoped and started public engagement, and would result in fewer bridge, freight, safety, and other projects than currently planned. These changes would also contradict the investment direction identified in the 20-year Minnesota State Highway Investment Plan through the public process required under Minn. Stat. 174.03. MnDOT does not object to performing the analysis and reporting those results to the legislature, but meeting the targets would have significant impacts to the trunk highway program.
- This legislation does not include any adjustments to aircraft registration rates. Along with a modification to the airline flight property tax, these investments would allow us to provide more airport development grants for Minnesota's 133 public airports. Excluding Metropolitan Airports Commission airports, which also have substantial funding needs, we estimate \$1.15 billion is needed by 2030 to maintain and expand our system of airports.

Again, thank you for allowing me to share this input on the omnibus transportation bill. I look forward to working with you so we can finalize a bill that maximizes the health of people, the environment and our economy for Minnesota's multimodal transportation system.

Sincerely,



Nancy Daubenberger, P.E. (MN)  
Commissioner

cc: The Honorable Jon Koznick, Chair, House Transportation Committee  
The Honorable Erin Koegel, Chair, House Transportation Committee

*Equal Opportunity Employer*

# MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY



## Office of the Commissioner

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[www.dps.mn.gov](http://www.dps.mn.gov)

April 22, 2025

Chair Stephenson, Chair Torkelson and Members of the House Ways and Means Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony on House File 2438 (HF 2438). The Department of Public Safety (DPS) works to serve all communities to build a safer Minnesota. I want to thank Chair Koznick and Chair Koegel for their work on this bill. The investments included in the Governor's and Lt. Governor's transportation budget bill and HF2432 come in the midst of a challenging budget outlook facing Minnesota.

I am concerned that this bill includes a lower DPS operating adjustment than the Governor's budget. The measured operating adjustment recommended by the Governor would assist DPS in addressing cost pressures while still requiring us to make strategic decisions to ensure minimal impacts to the public safety work of our divisions. The amount included in this bill will require difficult decisions that will have serious ramifications for public safety in Minnesota. The cuts to the State Patrol are particularly concerning and will result in fewer troopers. I urge this committee to fully fund the modest operating adjustment recommended by the Governor and reverse the cuts to the State Patrol included in this bill.

I appreciate the inclusion of the hiring and recruitment initiatives for the Minnesota State Patrol. This will not only help ensure that open positions can be filled but also that the State Patrol can effectively prepare for future retirements. This funding is critical in maintaining our current Troopers and recruiting a quality workforce that is reflective of those served. However, this bill only contains funding to run an additional academy one time. I hope the committee will reconsider making this an ongoing investment for the State Patrol.

There are several important items included for DPS's Driver and Vehicle Services Division (DVS). Thank you for incorporating the technical changes to name change documents and criminal vehicular operation provisions. I appreciate the extension of the Commercial Learner's Permit from six months to twelve months to align with federal commercial driver's license regulations.

I also appreciate the inclusion of the authorization of online renewal for driver's licenses, changes to dealer plates, and the expansion of background checks for auto dealers. DVS is committed to providing customers with the services they need in the manner they want to receive them. Many customers will appreciate the option to go online to complete these transactions for every other renewal. The expanded background checks for auto dealers included in this bill will strengthen consumer protections.

The inclusion of the No-Fee Transactions for deputy registrars and driver's license agents as recommended by the Governor will ensure that these important business partners are compensated for all the work that they do. I encourage this committee to reconsider the inclusion of the Governor's

Alcohol  
and Gambling  
Enforcement

Bureau of  
Criminal  
Apprehension

Driver  
and Vehicle  
Services

Emergency  
Communication  
Networks

Homeland  
Security and  
Emergency  
Management

Minnesota  
State Patrol

Office of  
Communications

Office of  
Justice Programs

Office of  
Pipeline Safety

Office of  
Traffic Safety

State Fire  
Marshal

recommendation to require Minnesotans to change license plates at the time of transfer. This change would result in additional revenue to deputy registrars and reduce the nuisance of tickets and tolls going to the prior owner.

I am concerned that the rulemaking authority for the Ignition Interlock Device Program (IIDP) is not included in this bill. IIDP Program Guidelines and Manufacturer Certification Standards that have been drafted and approved through the full rulemaking process will better serve Ignition Interlock participants and participating manufacturers, ensure transparency, and provide DVS the ability to update the standards in response to legislative changes. I appreciate the partial funding provided in this bill but without the rulemaking authority, it will be less impactful.

I also encourage this committee to reconsider the changes to the revenue from the blackout plates. As a special revenue funded agency, DVS is charged with generating revenue from fees to cover all its operating expenses and meet customer expectations. DVS receives no general fund dollars. The blackout plate revenue is based on a contribution fee that is elected by the consumer who chooses to have a blackout plate. This creative idea provides revenue to support DVS operations without the need to raise fees on all consumers. I urge this committee to keep revenue generated from blackout plates directed into the Driver and Vehicle Services Operating Account to support the services DVS provides.

I also want to thank you for including funding for the DPS Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) planning and administration match. This increase will allow OTS to fully utilize available federal funding to ensure long-term stability for OTS. The inclusion of the requirement for seatbelts in Class II ATVs when the unit is factory equipped with a restraint system, and when the Class II ATV is operated on or within the right-of-way of a public roadway will reduce the number of serious injuries and deaths that result from an occupant being ejected during a crash event. I also appreciate the technical changes to the authority of the Advisory Council on Traffic Safety (ACTS). These changes will support traffic safety across the state for years to come.

I am grateful for the inclusion of the standardize penalties for excessive speeding. Drivers traveling through areas at more than 35 miles over the posted speed limit are as dangerous as those who travel at over 100 miles per hour and the penalties should be the same.

Thank you also for the DPS agency wide grant administration authority to utilize a set percentage of grant appropriations to administer grants. Providing DPS the authority for these administrative costs is vital to ensuring adequate resources for critical oversight functions for grants such as monitoring grantees and programs to ensure compliance with requirements, ensuring timely financial and progress reporting, and ensuring compliance with state and federal requirements. These functions are a critical component of preventing fraud or mismanagement, as well as ensuring grant dollars serve their intended purposes.

I am disappointed that the funding for the new Minnesota State Patrol headquarters is not included. Combining the six metro locations into one centralized space will assist with recruiting and retention, ensure compliance with CALEA standards, provide necessary storage space for vehicles and evidence, and allow the State Patrol to meet current and future demands to serve the public. I look forward to further conversations on how to fund this important investment.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony on this bill. I want to again thank the members and staff of the House Transportation Committee for their support of DPS and our Transportation Divisions. I look forward to our continued partnership to support public safety in Minnesota.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bob Jacobson".

Bob Jacobson, Commissioner

April 22, 2025

Dear Ways and Means Committee Members,

Minnesota has had a strong horseracing industry over the past four decades, and the Racing Commission plays a critical role through its mission to protect the public's interest to ensure the integrity of horse racing and card playing. To fulfill its mission, the Commission is attentive to all aspects of horse racing and card playing. This includes licensing the tracks and all personnel, enforcing the rules around racing and card playing, ensuring the safety of animal and human participants through pre-race veterinary examinations and post-race sample collections for testing, and distributing awards to breeders and grants for racehorse aftercare.

The racing industry is now facing significant financial pressures, including the costs associated with the Horseracing Integrity and Safety Authority (HISA). HISA was created by Congress in 2020, to establish uniform standards in horseracing across the country, and its rules took effect in 2022. Congress did not provide funding for HISA; instead, HISA assesses states for the costs of its oversight functions. In 2025, Minnesota's assessment from HISA is nearly \$700,000.

We ask for your support of the Commission's proposal, which is included in HF2783, for a revenue source to help it pay most of the annual assessment from HISA. Specifically, the Commission is seeking to increase the fee paid by online wagering platforms that host betting on horseracing, known as Advanced Deposit Wagering (ADW), from one percent to two percent. ADW platforms allow Minnesotans to wager on races conducted outside of Minnesota. The current fee collected from ADW platforms is used to offset some of the Commission's regulatory costs. Increasing the fee would provide the Commission with added revenue to pay a large portion of the annual HISA assessment. The fee is paid by ADW platforms and reduces the amount these platforms keep from wagers. This proposal has no General Fund impact.

HISA's rules only apply to Thoroughbred racing, which means it only impacts Canterbury Park. Any portion of the HISA assessment that the Commission is unable to pay is passed on to track, which in turn will likely pass much of the costs to the horsepersons at the track. This puts a significant economic burden on those who own or train horses, as well as the many people who work for horse trainers. This proposal would help provide stability for the Thoroughbred racing industry and its participants. Additionally, by continuing to pay a large portion of the assessment, the Commission will continue to have a seat at the table with HISA in the implementation of its rules and the impacts it has on the Commission's operations.

Sincerely,



Kyle Gustafson  
Executive Director



April 22, 2025

Dear Co-Chairs Stephenson and Torkelson, and Ways and Means Committee members:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on HF 2783, the State Government Finance Omnibus. We are grateful for the inclusion of the base funding for our agency but see a number of missed opportunities, especially in the context of the substantial target provided to the committee.

### ***Operating Adjustment***

HF 2783 provides an operating adjustment to MMB of \$500,000 per year, well short of the \$891,000 in FY 2026 and \$1.806 million in subsequent years recommended by the Governor. Agencies, including MMB's own operations, face rising costs each year due to increases in employer-paid health care contributions, FICA and Medicare, along with other salary and compensation-related costs. Other operating costs, like rent and lease, fuel and utilities, and IT and legal services also grow. We would hope the committee would consider adopting the Governor's recommended levels as work on the bill continues.

The operating adjustments in the bill may also generally benefit from some rebalancing for more even treatment across branches of government.

### ***Enhanced Oversight Capacity***

Not included in this bill is a proposal from the Governor's recommendations to fund enhanced oversight capacity at MMB. This also overlaps with the Governor's package of anti-fraud proposals. Minnesotans expect robust oversight of their state government and the expenditure of public funds. MMB has identified several investments needed to meet the expectations of our various oversight activities. This proposal recommended by the Governor includes resources for:

- The Internal Control and Accountability Unit, which provides tools, consults with agency partners, and tracks resolution of audit findings
- Statewide Payroll Services to provide additional oversight and compliance reviews of agency payroll practices
- Enterprise Labor Relations to provide additional oversight and compliance work on implementation of collective bargaining agreements
- Our Accounting Services division to engage agency partners in the review and update of statewide financial management policies and procedures

April 22, 2025

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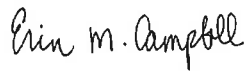
***Healthy Aging Subcabinet***

We appreciate our discussions with Chair Klevorn over the interim on lifting up issues related to aging Minnesotans and the work over the 2023 and 2024 interims of the Legislative Task Force on Aging. However, in a time of constrained fiscal resources we would caution against adding a new function if current agency operations continue to be underfunded in this bill. We would also appreciate the opportunity to work on this provision, especially to determine how the appropriation provided in the bill aligns with the requirements and responsibilities of the new entity and the nature of those responsibilities.

***Carryforward Authority***

Also missing from this bill, the Governor recommended expanding agency operating budget carry-forward authority to allow agencies to uniformly carry forward unexpended non-grant operating appropriations for the second year of a biennium into the next biennium. This would provide an important tool to help manage cost pressures and would align the executive branch with the carry-forward authority already granted to the legislature for the management of its finances.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Erin M. Campbell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Erin Campbell  
Commissioner





Friends of Minnesota  
Scientific & Natural Areas



Minnesota Center for  
Environmental Advocacy



Minnesota  
Environmental  
Partnership



Minnesota  
INTERFAITH  
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SIERRA CLUB  
NORTH STAR CHAPTER



Resilient Cities & Communities  
Visionary People. Vibrant Places. Regenerative Futures.

April 23, 2025

Co-Chair Torkelson, Co-Chair Stephenson, Vice-Chair Robbins, Vice-Chair Agbaje, and members of the House Ways and Means Committee.

We write to you in opposition to HF 2438, which would undermine investments in public transit and active transportation, and delay implementation of climate pollution mitigation from transportation. From securing long-term, dedicated funding for transit, biking, walking, and rolling in 2023 and strengthening our Driving Down Emissions<sup>1</sup> law in 2024— Minnesota is on a nation-leading path to a healthier, more affordable, and more sustainable future. HF 2438 undercuts our state's progress with the following budget recommendations:

- **Metro Transit.** \$40M cut in FY 26-27 and \$64M cut in FY 28-29.
- **Greater MN Transit.** \$12M cut in FY 26-27 and \$12M cut in FY 28-29.
- **Special Transportation Services, such as Metro Mobility and Metro Move.** \$27M cut in FY 28-29.
- **Free Rides on Buses for Metro Mobility Certified Customers.** \$175K cut in FY 26-27 and \$200K cut in FY 28-29.
- **Active Transportation.** \$4M cut in FY 26-27. \$8M cut in FY 28-29.
- **Passenger Rail Base Funding.** \$8.9M cut in FY 28-29.
- **General Transit Fund Transfer to Passenger Rail Account.** \$16M cut in FY 28-29.

Two years ago, the legislature passed long-overdue and urgently needed funding to improve transit service. Investments in public transit, biking, walking, and rolling are improving daily lives and building a better future for our communities. Minnesotans are counting on these resources to help save money and give us more choices in how we get to the important places in our lives. The cost of transportation, specifically car ownership, remains high for households, even more so for low-income families. It's a burden that state leaders have shown they can help alleviate by supporting the expansion of public transit and active transportation. We must not walk back on making residents' lives easier.

Additionally, HF 2438 undermines Minnesota's trailblazing policy wins by introducing the following amendments to the **Transportation Greenhouse Gas Emissions Impact Assessment** statute:

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.move-mn.org/how-move-minnesota-is-leading-the-nation-to-curb-climate-pollution-from-transportation/>

- Delaying the implementation of greenhouse gas and vehicle miles traveled requirements for highway expansion projects by 3.5 years despite an already past effective date of February 1, 2025 and opposition from the Minnesota Department of Transportation.<sup>2</sup>
- Delaying the implementation of assessing and requiring mitigation measures for the full portfolio of trunk highway projects from August 1, 2027, to August 1, 2028.
- Requiring a transfer of funds from the transportation impact assessment and mitigation account if the unencumbered account balance has gone above half of the amount of funds deposited in the account in a fiscal year, where up to 90 percent of the available balance must be transferred to the Highway User Tax Distribution Fund.

Over the past two years, Minnesota legislators passed and expanded our Driving Down Emissions law to build roads in ways that protect our climate and communities. With our wins, we are set to build in ways that curb pollution and provide more options to take transit, walk, bike, and roll. Environmental degradation from how we have historically built roads threatens the people and places we love. Our recent success in Minnesota is a strong reminder that the way we plan and build our communities can be sustainable. Other states that recognize the urgency of the moment, such as Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, and Oregon, are looking to our wins here in Minnesota and Colorado.

With federal funding continuing to be uncertain for transportation and climate resiliency projects, now is exactly the time for state leaders to reassure Minnesotans that we can rely on our state's continued leadership on transit and environmental stewardship here at home. State leaders must reassure residents that they take the clean air and water, our safety, and our health seriously. Our communities deserve a transportation system that protects our health, environment, and our future. **The legislature should maintain current public transit and active transportation funding levels and reject policy that attempts to delay or water down the implementation of the Transportation Greenhouse Gas Emissions Impact Assessment statute.**

Respectfully,

Alliance for Sustainability  
 Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota  
 CURE  
 DFL Environmental Caucus  
 Elders Climate Action-Twin Cities  
 Fresh Energy  
 Friends of Minnesota Scientific and Natural Areas  
 Health Professionals for a Healthy Climate  
 Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy  
 Minnesota Environmental Partnership  
 Minnesota Interfaith Power and Light  
 MN350  
 Move Minnesota & Move Minnesota Action  
 Resilient Cities and Communities  
 Sierra Club North Star  
 Andy Willette, Citizens' Climate Lobby  
 Sharon Mickelson, Citizens' Climate Lobby

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.house.mn.gov/comm/docs/ObecYoowCkOf9SVteXaBcQ.pdf>

April 22, 2025

Representative Paul Torkelson, Co-Chair  
Representative Zach Stephenson, Co-Chair  
Ways and Means Committee

**Subject: H.F. 2783 Omnibus State Government Budget Bill**

Dear Co-Chairs Stephenson and Torkelson,

I recognize the challenge before you of crafting a state budget given the recent economic forecast, as well as the broader economic uncertainty. In recognition of those challenges, I appreciate that the sections of the State Government omnibus bill pertaining to the Department of Administration (Admin) align with Governor Walz's overall recommendations.

In particular, I would like to thank you for recognizing the importance of adequately funding the In Lieu of Rent account, which includes maintenance and operation of the Capitol and grounds, legislative facilities, and space for veterans' service organizations. The facilities covered by this account are essential to government operations and the public's ability to access and participate in the governing process. Additionally, the extension of the Capitol Mall Design Framework funding will allow for completion of the first phase currently underway on the Capitol Complex.

As you work through the budget bill and conference committee process, I encourage you to fund Governor Walz's recommendation for Admin's very modest operating adjustment increase to cover basic and growing expenses for health care, compensation, utilities, and information technology. Demand for the agency's general fund services has grown over time and, without an operating adjustment, service delivery will be impacted.

Additionally, we request the inclusion of policy language to establish the no-cost State Facility Renewable Energy, Storage, and Electric Vehicle account. This change would enable Admin to help state agencies leverage federal cash rebates for eligible renewal energy projects and electric vehicle purchases to fund future eligible projects. Installing renewable energy upgrades will help agencies avoid operating costs.

I look forward to working with you and Co-Chairs Klevorn and Nash through the conference committee process. Thank you for your ongoing partnership.

Sincerely,



Digitally signed by  
Tamar Gronvall  
Date: 2025.04.22  
11:54:18 -05'00'

Tamar Gronvall  
Commissioner





# SIERRA CLUB

## NORTH STAR CHAPTER

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Saint Paul, MN 55114  
612-659-9124  
[sierraclub.org/minnesota](https://sierraclub.org/minnesota)

### Testimony to the House Ways & Means Committee on HF2438

**Peter Wagenius, Legislative Director, Sierra Club North Star Chapter**

**April 23, 2025**

I'm Peter Wagenius from Sierra Club North Star Chapter

**This bill is unfair to the metro area**, as a matter of tax equity. This bill also exacerbates regional inequity in governance of tax revenue

First, let's talk about tax equity.

Since this bill would cut, and then eliminate (in the next biennium), general fund support for Metro Transit, metro taxpayers are increasingly being told that we need to pay for our own transit. By contrast, transit in Greater Minnesota gets the strong majority of its funding from the state's General Fund. This was already an issue in 2023 when we approved the metro area sales tax, but an elimination of state general fund support was not part of the deal.

Second, let's talk about governance of revenue.

This huge tax policy decision should have been paired with a conversation about governance. While transit systems in Greater Minnesota get the majority of their revenue from the General Fund, they nonetheless have local control over how those dollars are spent.

For Metro Taxpayers it is the opposite. Governance of tax revenue from metro taxpayers is bizarre, not just by national standards but also bizarre by comparison here in Minnesota.

Below I've included a summary of who is responsible for investing revenue for transit in: Duluth, Rochester, Saint Cloud, Winona, Mankato and Moorhead. In all those regions decision makers are accountable only to local voters. As it should be. But that doesn't apply to the metro.

Is this fair? If I were to say that we metro voters should have an equal say over how Rochester, Duluth or any other region manages **their** transit dollars, those regions would rightly object. For that matter, if there was a bill that gave me or other Hennepin County voters an equal say over

management of county road dollars in Todd, Nicollet, Sibley or St Louis Counties, If I said that, you would say "that's none of your business, Minneapolis man. We control our decisions over our dollars"

So it's not just that this bill rolls back needed climate action including the 3 ½ year delays in implementation of GHG emissions and VMT reduction targets, this bill reneges on the 2023 law in multiple ways. And it makes inequities in authority over tax revenue much worse. And how much did we talk about it in the transportation committee? Not At All.

This bill is not ready for prime time. Minnesotans would have been better off with a "lights" on bill which kept MNDOT and Met Council functioning at current levels. Please vote no.

To: Chair Gomez & Members of the House Taxes Committee

From: Sierra Club North Star Chapter

Date: April 21, 2025

Re: **Comparison of Met Council to Governance of Greater MN Transit**

While transit systems in Greater Minnesota get the majority of their revenue from the state's General Fund, they nonetheless have local control over how those dollars are spent.

For Metro Taxpayers it is the opposite. Governance of tax revenue for transit in the metro area is bizarre, not just bizarre by national standards but also bizarre by comparison here in Minnesota.

Below is a summary of who is responsible for governing transit in six Greater MN regions that provide fixed route transit service: Duluth, Rochester, Saint Cloud, Winona, Mankato and Moorhead. The summary shows a variety of governing models which include elected officials, appointed members, or both. Some have advisory bodies. Many are multi-jurisdictional, including elected officials from multiple cities, even across state lines.

But all six systems have two qualities in common:

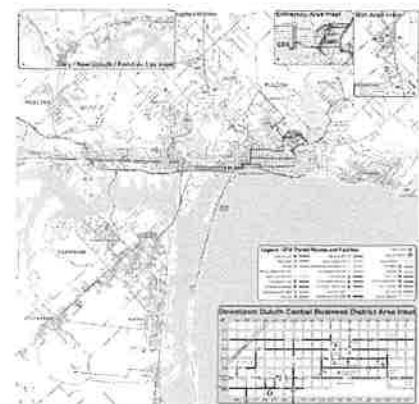
1. In none of these governing models are all of the board members appointed members and also all appointed by the same person.
2. None of the elected officials or appointees are chosen based on statewide election results. In all of these models, those in charge are accountable only to local voters.

That the Twin Cities Metro Area is bigger is not an excuse for governance to fail to follow similar and normal democratic principles. Large metros across the nation have figured this out.

## Duluth Transit Authority

### Board of Directors

All Board of Directors members must be residents of Duluth with the exception of one representative for the City of Superior. The Board consists of nine members; five of which represent the five City Council districts, one representative from the City of Superior, and three representing the City of Duluth At-Large. Each member may serve two consecutive three year terms on the Board of Directors.



## Saint Cloud Metro Bus

### Metropolitan Transit Commission



The Metro Bus Board of Commissioners is made up of five members:

Two members represent the City of St. Cloud

One member each from the City of Sartell, City of Sauk Rapids, and City of Waite Park.

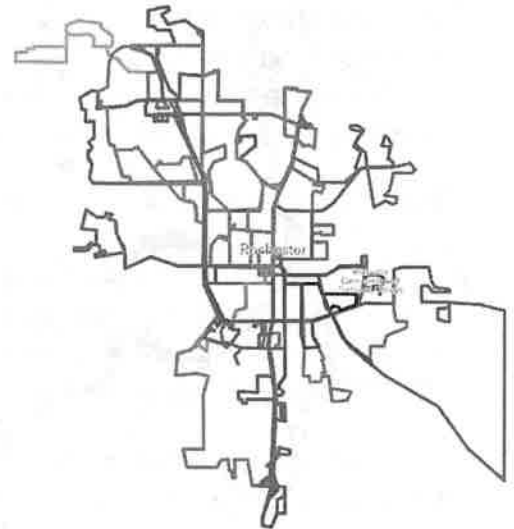
Board members traditionally have been either the current elected Mayor or City Council member.

## Rochester - Rochester Public Transit

Rochester Public Transit is managed by the City of Rochester which has a City Council of seven members. The City Council gets recommendations from the Citizens Advisory on Transit.

The advisory is composed of seven members appointed by the Mayor and approved by the Common Council. The seven members shall be selected based on the following criteria:

Resident of the City of Rochester with the exception of 1 seat which may be extended to a resident within the 4 surrounding townships of Rochester, Cascade, Marion or Haverhill.



## Winona Transit Service



### Transit Advisory Committee

12 seats on the committee staffed by the City Clerk

Advisory board only; any changes in our routes or service hours are approved by our governing board, which is the City Council.

## Fargo/Moorhead MATBUS



## Metro Area Transit Coordinating Board

Membership: The MAT Coordination Board (Board) is comprised of twelve voting members. The appointment of voting membership shall be as follows :

Fargo - two members of City Commission

Moorhead - two members of City Council

West Fargo - one member of City Commission

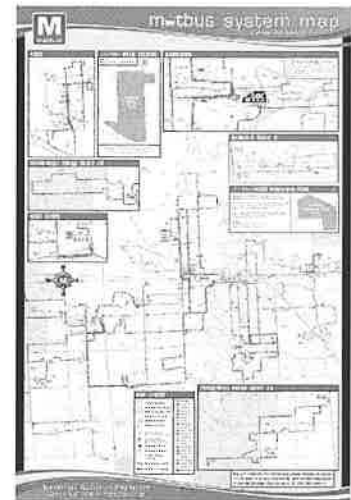
Dillworth - one member of City Council.

NDSU - one administrator

MHD Colleges - one from each college (MSUM, MState, Concordia)

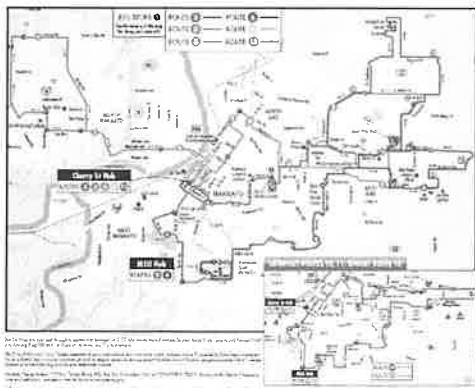
Valley Senior Services - one administrator

Board Chairperson - one



## **Mankato Public Transit**

Mankato Public Transit is managed by the City of Mankato which has a City Council of seven members.



Mankato has a charter form of government with a council-manager plan. Citizens elect the City Council, which consists of one Council Member for each of the city's five wards, a Council Member At-Large and a Mayor. The Council Member At-Large serves as president of the Council. The Mayor is a member of the City Council and is the ceremonial leader. Council members serve staggered, four-year terms.

The City Council gets recommendations from the Mankato/North Mankato Area Planning Organization

The Mankato/North Mankato Area Planning Organization (MAPO) will consist of 6 Policy Board members. Each member (or their appointed alternate) will be entitled to one full vote. No eligible voting member will have more than one vote. All of the membership will be local elected officials or their alternates. MAPO is advised by the Technical Advisory Committee.

Membership will be as follows:

City of Eagle Lake 1 Representative, City of Mankato 1 Representative, City of North Mankato 1 Representative, Blue Earth County 1 Representative, Nicollet County 1 Representative  
Townships 1 Representative.





Minnesota IT Services  
600 N. Roberts Street  
Suite 2800  
St. Paul, MN 55146

April 21, 2025

Representative Paul Torkelson  
Co-Chair  
House Ways and Means Committee  
2nd Floor, Centennial Office Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Representative Zack Stephenson  
Co-Chair  
House State Ways and Means Committee  
5th Floor, Centennial Office Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Co-Chair Torkelson, Co-Chair Stephenson and Committee members,

Minnesota IT Services (MNIT) serves an important role connecting Minnesotans to their state government and leading digital service delivery across the executive branch by strengthening digital infrastructure, enhancing cybersecurity, and empowering data-driven solutions to improve outcomes for Minnesotans. We are able to accomplish these goals with the help of critical partners, including the legislature, our state agency business partners, and the Technology Advisory Council (TAC). Together, we have made significant progress in advancing and maturing cybersecurity defenses, fostering collaboration, and modernizing systems across the enterprise. Despite these achievements, we recognize that important work remains ahead of us.

While we understand the current fiscal environment and the need to make difficult decisions, we must also acknowledge the impact of the budget reductions proposed in House File 2783 and the consequences these reductions will have.

MNIT's general fund base is the sole source of funding for our statewide leadership functions. This funding supports activities that advance the Whole-of-State Cybersecurity plan. It also ensures that MnGeo has timely, relevant, and available datasets, and can coordinate access to that data for private-sector and public-sector partners. These funds also support the advancement of transformative digital service goals of the Technology Advisory Council (formerly Blue Ribbon Council on IT).

The Whole-of-State Cybersecurity Plan has enabled MNIT, local governments, and schools to collaborate and enhance security services for Minnesota's public sector entities. However, reductions in funding for these efforts may hinder Minnesota's ability to address persistent and evolving cybersecurity threats. Additionally, these funding cuts could impact the capacity of the Minnesota Geospatial Information Office (MnGeo) to acquire and

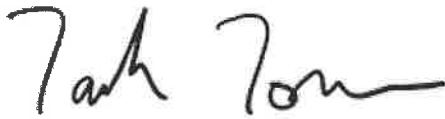
provide access to contemporary datasets. Relying on outdated data may impede governmental and private-sector users from making informed decisions in areas such as engineering, contracting, and resource utilization.

Finally, MNIT's ability to lead and carry out the transformative technology leadership goals of the Technology Advisory Council may be hampered by a need to reallocate resources. MNIT's general fund appropriation has supported key TAC goals, such as advancing customer experience, the shift from project to product-oriented solution delivery, and service modernization and maturity. These strategies and capabilities are crucial for ensuring that MNIT, and its state agency business partners, are well positioned to deliver innovative and secure digital services for Minnesotans.

We appreciate the opportunity to highlight these impacts and welcome continued discussions throughout the remainder of the budget process.

Thank you for your continued commitment to advancing digital services for Minnesotans, including the strong investments that the legislature made to advance cybersecurity, cloud transformation, and application modernization in prior legislative sessions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tarek Tomes". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Tarek" being more prominent than the last name "Tomes".

Tarek Tomes  
Commissioner and State Chief Information Office

*Equal Opportunity Employer*



**Canvassing access to multiple unit buildings by candidates and census workers standards modified.**  
*H.F. 2709, included in HF 1943, as amended*

Chairs Torkelson and Stephenson, and Members of the Committee,

The Minnesota Multi Housing Association (MHA) appreciates the opportunity to share our concerns regarding the inclusion of language from **HF 2709** in **HF 1943**. While we are generally supportive of efforts at expanding access for political candidates and census workers in multiple unit buildings, we are concerned that the current proposal would create significant operational and financial burdens for multifamily housing providers and also raise perceived security concerns for residents and staff.

**Our primary concerns include:**

- **Staffing and scheduling challenges:** Requiring access between 10:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. with only 24 hours' notice could force property staff to work unanticipated and extended hours, particularly if access is requested on weekends or holidays.
- **Increased operational costs:** Most multifamily properties do not maintain staff on-site during the full proposed access window. Complying with the bill may require hiring additional personnel or incurring overtime costs. These expenses may ultimately contribute to higher housing costs.
- **Disruption of operations:** A flat 24-hour notice requirement does not account for pre-scheduled events, maintenance activities, or holiday closures that could reasonably limit a property's ability to accommodate access on short notice.
- **Security concerns:** Permitting entry to individuals not known to property staff and not guests of residents presents real safety concerns, particularly in secure-access buildings. Without clear vetting or credentialing procedures, the bill could unintentionally create opportunities for unauthorized or malicious entry.

We are confident there is a path forward that honors the goals of this legislation while also respecting the legitimate needs of residents, property staff, and housing providers. We welcome further dialogue on this issue and would appreciate the opportunity to constructively engage.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Owen Neubauer", written over a light blue horizontal line.

Owen Neubauer  
Director of Public Policy

