

IBEW LOCAL 292



HF 2887 The House Transportation Omnibus bill. Conference Committee

May 03, 2023

Thank you, Senators and Representatives, for allowing us to provide this letter of support for HF 2887, The Transportation Omnibus Bill.

IBEW Local 292 represents 5,000 electrical workers in our jurisdiction, and today we are submitting this support for the Jobs and Labor omnibus bill on behalf of the 14,000 IBEW workers who work throughout the state of Minnesota in the electrical industry.

We would like to highlight some of the items within this bill that the IBEW supports. We encourage members of the House to pass this bill as amended.

We support the funding, as a match to federal funding, for passenger rail service from the Twin Cities to Duluth and improved service to Chicago. Funding passenger rail service in these corridors will provide jobs for IBEW members in the Electrical construction industry and rail industry through construction and operation of these projects. Jobs will also be created from transit orientated development along these corridors that will be stimulated by these improvements.

We support the metropolitan region sales and use tax for the continued support and maintenance of the regional transit system; however, we are concerned about the exclusion of the Green Line SWLRT system. Though this has been a troubled expenditure during development and engineering, we would encourage you not to turn your back on funding to get this project done and support continued operation of the line once it is constructed. The survival of the Green Line extension SWLRT, is vital to our overall transit blueprint for the metropolitan area. Please also include the \$50 Million for the Blue line extension, Bottineau Line, included in the Senate Version

We want to thank you for the inclusion of the state matching funds to compliment the electrical vehicle Infrastructure federal funding through the IJIA, and for including the complementary labor provision of Prevailing Wage and the Electrical Vehicle Infrastructure Training Program. The IBEW has been training and certifying electricians through EVITP for over two years and we have a workforce ready to get to work to build this safely, efficiently, and confidently throughout the state.

Lastly, sustainable, long-term transportation and transit funding is critical to the implementation and operation of the high-quality efficient transportation and transit systems that Minnesota needs now and into the future. This bill does include new and expanded sources of revenue for us to achieve these goals. There may be some heartache about raising revenue at a time when the state is experiencing a record surplus. Simply put, we cannot rely on a one-time appropriation to fund the current and future needs for improved roads and bridges that connect people and commerce throughout the state as well as the much-needed expansion of a comprehensive transit system to provide the means for the residents of Minnesota to commute efficiently for work, recreation, and necessity. We also support the delivery fee in addition to the Metro area sales tax to provide sustainable revenue.

Please support HF 2887. Please support good public policy around job creation in the transportation and transit industry.

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