

BROTHERHOOD OF LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERS AND TRAINMEN

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JOEL J. MUELLER

Chairman - Minnesota State Legislative Board

Chair Frank Hornstein,
Chair, House Transportation Finance & Policy Committee
563 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

May 2, 2023

Chairman Hornstein,

On behalf of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, a labor union representing Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen working on all railroads throughout the state of Minnesota, I am writing you today in support of the Northern Lights Express passenger rail project connecting the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul to the Twin Ports of Duluth MN and Superior WI.

A tremendous amount of work has been done by many groups and individuals to get this project to where it is today. The timing could not be better, with many people realizing the environmental benefits of passenger rail service as well as the convenience of traveling by train, many citizens in our state are embracing public transportation by rail therefore reducing the number vehicles on our roads.

The Northern Lights Express will carry veterans from Northern Minnesota to the VA clinic. As well as allowing other Minnesotans better access to all of our great hospitals and clinics in the metro area. Students will be able commute to and from many of Minnesota's distinguished Colleges and Universities on a regular basis. This rail project will allow sports fans to be able to get to all of the stadiums in the metro area. With Duluth being the gateway to the natural wonders of Minnesota's arrowhead, many vacationers will be using this service to get there. With more workers realizing the benefits of working from home this project will also allow for workforce development outside the metro area.

The Northern Lights Express is the most shovel ready passenger rail projects in the nation. The funding for this project would open up federal dollars for this project and seize the opportunity to connect the Twin Ports with the Twin Cities via passenger rail.

The hardworking Engineers of the BLET stand ready to operate the trains of the Northern Lights Express. We urge the members of the Senate Transportation Committee to support HF 409.

Thank you for taking the time to consider our position on this project.

Respectfully,

Joel Mueller
Chairman BLET
Minnesota State Legislative Board