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

Work Zone Safety Pilot Program - HF 2295 (DE2)

Dear Chair Hornstein and members of the House Transportation Finance and Policy Committee:

Associated General Contractors of Minnesota (AGC of MN) and its 400+ members have worked hard over the years with the legislature, regulators, and our construction industry partners to provide the increased protections for highway workers and the traveling public. AGC of MN asks for your support of HF 2295 to establish a pilot program to make construction work zones safer.

Every year, hundreds of people die in highway work zone crashes, including many of the men and women our members employ. Working in the roadway is normally challenging, but it has become even more challenging in recent years as the number of vehicles speeding through work zones has increased. The excessive speeds lead to more crashes and more times when a passing vehicle passes the orange barricades. A recent annual nationwide survey of highway construction firms conducted by the Associated General Contractors of America shows two-thirds of the respondents reported at least one crash in the past year involving a moving vehicle at highway work zones where they operate. Those crashes pose a risk to construction workers. Indeed, 17% of the crashes resulted in injury to construction workers. They are even more likely to harm the people in those vehicles. Drivers or passengers were injured in 44% of the crashes.

The bottom line is the most effective way to improve work zone safety is to get motorists to slow down and pay attention. Everyone is responsible for work-zone safety. Drivers must be attentive and held accountable for their actions.

We believe the collaborative process required by HF 2295 will lead to safer working conditions in work zones for construction workers and the traveling public. Thank you to Representative Bernardy for championing this effort and to the committee for considering this legislation. This pilot program will protect the women and men who work in the roadway and those that that travel through them every day.

Sincerely,

Laura Ziegler
Director of Highway/Heavy and Government Affairs