

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

May 23, 2025

The Honorable Sean Duffy
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Duffy:

As Members of Minnesota's Congressional Delegation, we write to express our concern regarding the pause of seven grants awarded to the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) under the Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) program, formerly known as RAISE, the Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant (MPDG) program, Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-saving Transportation (PROTECT) Program, Low/No Emission Propane Busses and Fueling Stations Grant program, and the Low Carbon Transportation Materials Grant. The seven projects, listed below, were awarded a total of \$142.1 million to be combined with local matching funds to reconstruct aging infrastructure, improve safety, and increase connectivity throughout Minnesota.

BUILD Grant: Highway 197 (Paul Bunyan Drive) Safety and Mobility Improvement Project

- The project was awarded \$18 million to reconstruct State Highway 197, build three roundabouts, and boost highway safety by creating new traffic signal systems and urbanized cross sections.

MPDG Grant: Highway 210 Brainerd Multimodal Connectivity Project: \$25 million

- This project was awarded \$25 million to reconstruct a four mile stretch of Highway 210, also known as Washington Street, in Brainerd.

BUILD Grant: Highway 65 Improvements Project: 97th Ave to 117th Ave

- The project was awarded \$20 million to fund the final design, right-of-way acquisition, and construction on Trunk Highway 65 from its intersection at 97th Avenue to north of its intersection with 117th Avenue through central parts of the city. The project features several interchange improvements, added frontage roads, and safety improvements.

BUILD Grant: Robert Street Complete Streets and Viaduct Replacement

- The project was awarded \$25 million to reconstruct Robert Street, a critical transportation artery connecting downtown Saint Paul to the West Side community of Saint Paul by crossing the Mississippi River. The project will reconstruct the crumbling 95-year-old Robert Street viaduct and the roadway to implement necessary safety improvements.

PROTECT Grant: West Central Minnesota I-94 Blowing and Drifting Snow Control Project

- The project was awarded \$13.7 million to install 24 miles of snow fence across 38 sites to address snow control along nearly 120 miles of I-94 between Moorhead and Alexandria.

Low/No Emission Propane Busses and Fueling Stations Grants: Two grants totaling \$8.5 million

- The Low/No Emissions Grant will help two rural transit providers upgrade their vehicle fleets and infrastructure: United Community Action Partnership's Community Transit will replace six gas-powered buses with six propane-fueled buses. UCAP provides rural public transit for eight counties in southwest Minnesota. The second transit provider, Friendly Rider Transit, will replace three gas- and diesel-powered transit buses with three propane-fueled buses and a propane fueling tank at its Wadena Transit Facility.
- The Bus and Bus Facilities Grant will allow Cedar Valley Services, Inc. (SMART Transit), to build two state-of-the-art transit facilities in the cities of Austin and Waseca. The new facilities will enhance operational efficiency for the entire SMART Transit system, providing safer, more reliable transit for local communities.

Low Carbon Transportation Materials Grant: Statewide

- MnDOT was awarded this \$31.9 million to assist the state in purchasing American-made low carbon construction materials and products including asphalt, glass, steel, and concrete for use in transportation projects .

Completing these projects is a matter of life, health, and safety for our constituents in Minnesota. The BUILD, MPDG, and PROTECT grants would reconstruct roadways or construct safety infrastructure on critical corridors throughout the state that are essential to police, fire, and EMS when responding to a crisis. These roads are daily routes for commuters and school buses taking children to and from school. MnDOT and our local governments determined that improvements to these roads are needed to increase safety for Minnesotans. These critical corridors drive commerce for the cities of Bemidji, Blaine, and Saint Paul, and the Brainerd lakes district. The businesses along these corridors create economic growth and revenue for the state and localities. Should movement not be made on these grants, the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) would be directly impacting the lives, health, safety, and economic opportunities of our constituents in Minnesota.

By pausing these projects, thus causing instability for financing these projects, DOT is causing concern for our state department of transportation, state legislators, counties, and city governments who have worked hard to secure matching funds for the grants. Securing these seven grants took years of perseverance and advocacy from the neighborhood to the county board and city council, to the state legislature, and to the federal government. We ask that the Department work to keep commitments made to our local governments and work to execute these grant agreements.

Understanding the impact that these seven grants have on Minnesota, we ask that the U.S. Department of Transportation work with MnDOT to execute grant agreements for these awards. We look forward to your prompt response and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

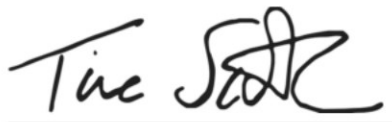
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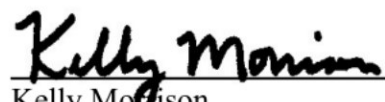
Betty McCollum
Member of Congress



Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator



Tina Smith
United States Senator



Kelly Morrison
Member of Congress

CC: The Honorable Nancy Daubenberger, Commissioner, Minnesota Department of
Transportation