

# INTERNATIONAL UNION OF OPERATING ENGINEERS

LOCAL NO. 49, 49A, 49B, 49C, 49D, 49E, 49L  
MINNESOTA • NORTH DAKOTA • SOUTH DAKOTA

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February 15, 2023

Chair Pappas and members of the Senate Capital Investments Committee:

The International Union of Operating Engineers Local 49 (IUOE Local 49) represents more than 12,000 Operating Engineers and their families in Minnesota. Our members include heavy equipment operators and mechanics who work on both public and private construction sites including roads and bridges, residential and commercial construction, as well as energy projects.

Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to communicate our support for the delete all amendment to SF 676 pertaining to capital improvement appropriations.

As Senators that serve on other committees, you are well versed in the state's infrastructure needs. The state's highway investment plan has identified almost \$17 billion in unmet needs over the next 20 years for an annual funding gap of \$885 million. There are 874 bridges in Minnesota rated in poor condition. And in 2022, the American Society of Civil Engineers gave our road system the failing grade of D+. The Center for Disease Control acknowledges that no level of lead exposure is safe for children. Yet, in Minnesota, there are an estimated 100,000 to 260,000 lead lines delivering drinking water to homes.

Road and bridge projects create the core system for the delivery of goods and services. Investments in wastewater and drinking water systems are investments in the health of our families. These fundamental systems are investments in our state and at their core, the basic function of government.

Furthermore, the infrastructure projects funded in this bill mean good paying jobs for men and women in the construction trades, including members of Local 49. They are family supporting jobs that pay livable wages, provide stable health benefits, and pensions for people upon retirement.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to express our support for SF 676.

Sincerely,

John Pollard, Legislative Director International Union of Operating Engineers Local 49