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Minnesota Legislative Board

January 27, 2023

On behalf of SMART-TD (Sheet Metal, Air, Rail, and Transportation Union-Transportation Division) representing Railroad Conductors, Engineers, and Yardmasters working in Minnesota, I'm writing in support of the Northern Lights Express passenger rail initiative.

The tremendous amount of work done by many groups and individuals over the last 20 years to advance this plan is paying off. NLX is a ready-to-go project at a time when our nation is embracing and funding public transportation by train. It's time for Minnesota to step up with the state portion of funding needed to secure the federal dollars available to complete this project.

Northern Lights Express will carry children from northern Minnesota to the robust network of children's hospitals in the Twin Cities Metro without fear of bad weather or animal strikes on the I-35 corridor. This project will connect veterans to the VA, students will be able to commute to and from school on a more regular basis, and sports fans can get to the stadiums. Duluth is the gateway to the beautiful arrowhead region of our great state and NLX is the connection for Minnesotans looking to get out of the metro and enjoy our natural wonders.

The working men and women of SMART-TD stand ready and proud to crew and staff the trains operating as Northern Lights Express.

Thank you for taking the time to consider our position. Please reach out to us with any questions.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "N. Katich", written over a horizontal line.

Nicholas Katich
MN Legislative Director
SMART-TD