



2429 Nicollet Ave
Minneapolis, MN 55404
www.100percentmn.org

April 18, 2024

Chair Dibble and Members of the Transportation Committee,

I am writing to express our support for House File 5284, as amended in SCS5284A-3, the committee's finance and policy bill. We want to lift up four sections of the bill.

First, thank you for including language to improve the colocation of electric transmission lines within highway corridors (Lines 26.28-29.30; 81.16-81.23). To achieve carbon-free electricity by 2040, Minnesota will need to accelerate the deployment of renewable generation facilities across our state. We'll need to grow our transmission capacity along with it, to connect generation with end users and to make the system, as a whole, more reliable.

Likewise, to reach our state's net-zero emissions by 2050 goal, we'll need to keep our highways safe and efficient, while also improving Minnesotans' access to vehicle charging, transit services, and other colocated infrastructure, like broadband. Easing the siting of electric transmission is a critical step toward a more equitable and clean energy future.

Second, we strongly support the Zero Emission Transit Buses program (Lines 1.33-2.2; 74.7-76.4; 95.11-97.9). This bill would provide for a managed transition to cleaner vehicles for transit riders across the state. It does by requiring buses purchased after January 1, 2030 be zero-emission. The planning would happen both within the Department of Transportation and the Metropolitan Council. They must engage with relevant stakeholders, provide technical assistance, and revise the plans every three years. Should the zero-emission bus procurement not be feasible by 2030, the bill provides for a transparent off-ramp that may extend the commencement date or provide for a phase-in schedule.

We're glad the bill proposes funding for the planning. **We urge the committee to find additional ways to fund the incremental additional costs of zero-emission buses.** It will be essential that the State of Minnesota be a leading partner in funding this transition.

Third, we are glad you authorized improvements to Minnesota's Greenhouse Gas Emissions Impact Assessments (Lines 19.25-26.25). To more fully understand the impacts of highway planning, it's essential that we assess both projects and portfolios. This bill would help provide evaluators, the public, and policymakers with more of the data and tools we all need to make clear-eyed decisions together. The Technical Advisory Committee will be a real asset, bringing both expertise and experience to bear in implementation of the assessments and the law as a whole—the committee's balance of expertise, representation, and commitment to the bill's smooth implementation will be critical.

We encourage the committee to provide the Technical Advisory Committee with additional options for recommending mitigation measures like passenger rail and active transportation expansions. Ensuring that sufficient funding flexibility exists will help keep both road and multimodal projects on track and will help ensure the law's implementation meets the law's objectives.

Finally, we support the bill's Antidisplacement Community Prosperity Program (Lines 4.29-5.5; 103.2-104.31; 106.23-108.16). Its establishment and funding are important steps towards ensuring those along the Blue Line route fully share in the benefits of this public investment.

Thank you for your continuing work creating a more equitable and cleaner transportation system for Minnesotans.

Aurora Vautrin

Aurora Vautrin

Legislative Director of 100%

2429 Nicollet Ave

Minneapolis, MN 55404

www.100percentmn.org