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COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION
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March 24, 2017

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

Dear Secretary Chao:

Congratulations on your confirmation as Secretary of Transportation. I look forward to working with you as Congress and the Administration address burdensome regulations, stimulate private investment, and increase public safety.

I came to Congress on a platform of effective and efficient spending. For years Congress has funded DOT programs like New Starts and, unfortunately, these funds have sometimes gone to projects with little merit. One such project was the Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) system in Minneapolis, MN. Under the President's current budget outline this project would remain unfunded as it has yet to receive a full funding grant agreement (FFGA). I was encouraged by this piece of the President's recent budget outline.

While I understand a project that lacks a FFGA will not be included in the budget, should you consider issuing any additional FFGA's, I encourage you to not provide a FFGA for SWLRT. The almost \$1 billion in federal matching funds would be better spent on projects that justify the cost, have broad support, and yield real economic return.

You recently received a letter from the Majority Caucus in the Minnesota House and Senate (Attachment). This letter expresses a large number of relevant concerns that I respectfully request DOT take into consideration should it consider an FFGA for SWLRT. Please feel free to contact me or my Legislative Assistant, Andrew Giacini, at (202) 225-2271 with any questions or concerns.

Thank you for your consideration on this matter. As a member of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, I look forward to addressing the nation's out-of-date infrastructure with you.

Sincerely,



Jason Lewis
Member of Congress