

Minnesota House of Representatives

Centennial Office Building
658 Cedar Street
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155



Minnesota Senate

Minnesota Senate Building
95 University Avenue West
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

June 2, 2026

Governor Tim Walz
Minnesota State Capitol, Room 130
75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

Commissioner Nancy Daubenberger
Minnesota Department of Transportation
395 John Ireland Boulevard
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear Governor Walz and Commissioner Daubenberger,

As elected officials representing communities in Minneapolis, Saint Paul, and the surrounding region—including members of the Minnesota Legislature’s Transportation Committees and the Rethinking I-94 and Trunk Highway 252/I-94 Policy Advisory Committees—we respectfully request a pause on the Rethinking I-94 and Trunk Highway 252/I-94 projects.

While the most visible phase of the federal government’s military-style occupation, so-called “Metro Surge,” has subsided, its impact continues. The large-scale federal presence created deep and lasting fear in our communities. Enforcement actions persist—less visibly, but still disruptive and destabilizing—particularly in neighborhoods most affected by these projects. As a result, meaningful community engagement remains compromised.

Federal directives prohibiting consideration of climate impacts, public health, and equity in transportation decision-making fundamentally conflict with Minnesota law and values. If these projects proceed under those constraints, Minnesota’s longtime commitments—to clean air, climate responsibility, environmental justice, and equitable access to mobility—will be seriously undermined. MnDOT’s current approach—removing these considerations from formal environmental review and placing them in non-binding documents—creates a dangerous gap. What is not formally analyzed cannot be meaningfully mitigated, and this risks noncompliance with the Minnesota Environmental Policy Act as well as erosion of public trust. Proceeding under these conditions risks being perceived by many as acquiescence to an assertion of federal power aimed at reversing years of policy progress and undermining established legal and constitutional norms.

We want to be clear, this is not a call to abandon these projects. It is a call to get them right.

The Rethinking I-94 and Trunk Highway 252/I-94 corridors present a once-in-a-generation opportunity to repair historic and ongoing harms. The construction of I-94 in the 1960s destroyed thousands of homes and businesses, devastating communities from Rondo to Cedar-Riverside. Highway 252’s proposed expansion risks repeating this pattern, further fragmenting Brooklyn Park and Brooklyn Center and deepening divisions between neighborhoods and the Mississippi River. These decisions have contributed to some of the region’s most persistent disparities in health,

Governor Tim Walz
Commissioner Nancy Daubenberger
T.H. 252 and I-94
June 2, 2026
Page 2

homeownership, and economic opportunity—felt most acutely by Black, Brown, immigrant, and low-income communities along these corridors.

Done well, these projects could help reverse those harms—reducing roadway footprints, reconnecting neighborhoods, returning land for community-driven development, strengthening the tax base, improving safety and public health, advancing climate goals, and expanding access to reliable multimodal transportation. Done poorly—or rushed under current conditions—they risk locking in another generation of inequity.

Local governments and residents across affected communities have expressed significant concerns about major highway reconstruction projects that may further divide neighborhoods, undermine environmental justice goals, or fail to reflect community priorities. Many stakeholders have called for more thorough study of alternatives that better reconnect communities, address historical harms, and align transportation investments with broader public values. Moving forward without meaningful alignment with these local perspectives risks producing outcomes that lack legitimacy, public support, municipal consent, and long-term success.

A pause is necessary now. We cannot expect authentic engagement while communities are navigating fear, economic strain, and political instability. Nor can we responsibly advance projects of this magnitude while federal policy actively prohibits consideration of the very factors Minnesota law, and widely shared Minnesota values, require us to prioritize. These are decisions that will shape our region for the next 50 to 100 years. Rushing forward under these conditions risks outcomes that are not only flawed, but irreversible.

A pause would allow the state to restore conditions for safe, meaningful community engagement through deeper, more inclusive outreach; ensure compliance with Minnesota’s Environmental Policy Act and related statutes; recenter project evaluation on outcomes that matter, including safety, health, climate, access, and economic vitality; develop more transparent and accountable processes, including clear advisory committee structures and robust public participation; rebuild alignment with local governments and the communities most directly impacted.

We therefore respectfully request a pause on the Rethinking I-94 and TH 252/I-94 projects, at minimum through the current federal administration; a renewed and robust community engagement process grounded in trust, accessibility, and genuine participation; revising, strengthening and making more transparent, MnDOT’s evaluation process by adopting stronger, outcome-driven metrics for safety, equity, access, public health, air quality, climate, economic development, and community connectivity; structural improvements to ensure future transportation projects consistently align with Minnesota’s values and statutory obligations.

Decisions of this magnitude must be made with care, integrity, and the full participation of the people most affected. Minnesota has the opportunity—and the responsibility—to lead with its values, even in the face of federal pressure to abandon them.

Governor Tim Walz
Commissioner Nancy Daubenberger
T.H. 252 and I-94
June 2, 2026
Page 3

We are ready to work with you to deliver transportation investments that truly serve all Minnesotans, repair past harms, and build a more connected, healthy, and equitable future.

Respectfully,



Samantha Vang
State Representative, District 38B



XP Lee
State Representative, District 34B

Samantha Sencer-Mura

Samantha Sencer-Mura
State Representative, District 63A



Larry Kraft
State Representative, District 46A



Omar Fateh
State Senator, District 62



Zaynab Mohamed
State Senator, District 63



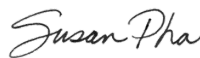
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State Senator, District 64



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State Senator, District 65



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State Senator, District 34



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