

**395 John Ireland Boulevard
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155**

August 26, 2026

Senator Bobby Joe Champion
President of the Senate
Minnesota Senate Building, Room 3401
95 University Avenue West
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155

Senator Erin P. Murphy
Majority Leader
Minnesota Senate Building, Room 3113
95 University Avenue West
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155

Senator Clare Oumou Verbeten
Minnesota Senate Building, Room 2101
95 University Avenue West
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101

Senator Fong Hawj
Minnesota Senate Building, Room 3231
95 University Avenue West
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155

Senator D. Scott Dibble
Chair
Senate Transportation Committee
Minnesota Senate Building, Room 3107
95 University Avenue West
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155

Senator Omar Fateh
Minnesota Senate Building, Room 3219
95 University Avenue West
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Senator Zaynab Mohamed
Minnesota Senate Building, Room 2103
95 University Avenue West
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Senator Sandra L. Pappas
Minnesota Senate Building, Room 2113
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Senator John A. Hoffman
Minnesota Senate Building, Room 2111
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Senator Susan Pha
Minnesota Senate Building, Room 3233
95 University Avenue West
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Senator Doron Clark
Minnesota Senate Building, Room 3403
95 University Avenue West
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155

Senator Ann M. Johnson Stewart
Minnesota Senate Building, Room 3211
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Representative Larry Kraft
Centennial Office Building, 5th Floor
658 Cedar Street
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155

Representative Samantha Vang
Centennial Office Building, 5th Floor
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Representative Xp Lee
Centennial Office Building, 5th Floor
658 Cedar Street
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155

Representative Samantha Sencer-Mura
Centennial Office Building, 5th Floor
658 Cedar Street
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155

Re: Rethinking I-94 and Highway 252/Interstate 94 Environmental Studies

Dear Legislators,

Thank you for your thoughtful communication and continued interest in the Rethinking I-94 and Highway 252/Interstate 94 environmental studies. **We appreciate your commitment to ensuring that Minnesota's values—clean air, climate responsibility, environmental justice, and equitable access to mobility—remain central in decision making.** These values have and will continue to guide our mission, vision, and work.

The Minnesota Department of Transportation has conducted a detailed analysis of your request for a pause. Our analysis was centered in the documented needs of each corridor, applicable federal and state environmental laws, and MnDOT's mission and values. We also considered the current phases of each study: Rethinking I-94 is nearing completion of its scoping phase, while the Highway 252/I-94 project is preparing to publish a draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Each study addresses corridor needs documented through years of engagement with residents and local partners.

Pausing or delaying these studies could render the data and public input no longer relevant, requiring a complete restart of the process and limiting our ability to address documented needs while postponing the improvements these communities say they need.

Continuing these environmental studies allows us to provide more details on how we can address these needs, grounded in and informed by robust public engagement, statutory compliance, and transparency, including following municipal consent processes. As part of these environmental studies, we will be able to provide more details on ways to improve infrastructure, safety, equity, and mobility.

It is important that we continue this work because these communities face significant challenges posed by aging, insufficient, and increasingly unsafe infrastructure.

Communities along I-94 continue to experience the legacy of the highway's construction, including historic displacement, reduced connectivity, health impacts, and constrained economic opportunity. These urgent challenges are compounded by aging infrastructure and safety concerns that disproportionately affect historically marginalized communities. The Highway 252/I-94 corridor faces pressing concerns including fatal and serious crashes, congestion, multimodal safety concerns, and neighborhood connectivity. Highway 252 and I-94 also have limited crossings for pedestrians and bicyclists, and operations along both corridors affect transit reliability.

Your letter expressed concern about federal directives and their alignment with Minnesota values. **While there have certainly been policy shifts over the four most recent federal administrations, Minnesota's own statutes and environmental regulations are guiding us through this process.** MnDOT is incorporating state requirements on environmental justice, community health, climate change, and equitable access regardless of federal policy.

The next step in the Rethinking I-94 project is a separate Scoping Decision Document (SDD) to fully incorporate state environmental processes. Future stages will incorporate new state statutes related to greenhouse gas emissions and potential mitigation measures alongside a thorough analysis of safety, mobility, health, and community impacts.

The Highway 252/I-94 project will soon publish separate state drafts and final EISs that analyze greenhouse gas emissions, climate change, demographic impacts, and cumulative potential effects. In addition, MnDOT's

Journey to Community Wellness initiative is developing strategies to improve community health, equity outcomes, and quality of life in these communities. This initiative goes beyond state and federal environmental processes and directly responds to concerns raised by the affected communities.

We appreciate the opportunity your letter provided to reflect on our work's alignment with Minnesota's values. We remain committed to upholding the state environmental review requirements, potential mitigation strategies, and Journey to Community Wellness initiative.

Thank you again for your engagement and partnership. We look forward to sharing more detailed information and hearing your feedback in upcoming phases. Please let me know if you would like to meet to further discuss these projects.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Nancy Daubenberger". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Nancy" and last name "Daubenberger" clearly distinguishable.

Nancy Daubenberger, P.E. (MN)
Commissioner