

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2309

October 28, 2011

Dear Dana,

Thank you for contacting me about transportation investments. I appreciate you taking the time to share your thoughts with me on this important issue for Minnesota and the nation.

Our roads, bridges, and public transit are in desperate need of repairs and upgrades. There are shovel-ready projects in Minnesota and across the nation that will put people back to work while retooling our economy for the 21st Century. Investing in our transportation infrastructure, such as high-speed rail and light rail, will improve safety, alleviate congestion, and improve air quality, all while ensuring U.S. competitiveness and creating much-needed jobs in the construction sector.

The federal surface transportation bill, known as SAFETEA-LU, authorizes the bulk of funding for transit and highway projects across the country. The 2005 law was set to expire in September 2009, but rather than reauthorize the legislation, Congress has passed a series of short-term extensions. After a temporary expiration of the current law in February 2010 forced the Transportation Department to freeze federal reimbursements to states for two days, the House and Senate both passed bills that extend the current law through the end of 2010. SAFETEA-LU has now been extended through the end of 2011.

We must work together to pass a long-term, comprehensive reauthorization of the federal transportation bill so that Minnesota has the reliable funding base needed to make long-term investments in transportation infrastructure. As the Senate works on its transportation bill, I will work with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to ensure that any legislation benefits Minnesota. Please be assured that I will keep your thoughts in mind as this process continues.

Thank you again for contacting me, and I look forward to hearing from you in the future on this or any other matter of concern to you.

Sincerely,



Al Franken
United States Senator