

Please include the following as testimony in today's and tomorrow's hearings on the Omnibus Transportation bills now before you. I am unable to attend.

My name is Mathews Hollinshead. As a member of the Met Council's Transportation Advisory Board, I oppose the following language in the House and Senate Omnibus Transportation bills:

line 57.24 ff in the House bill and line 47.16 ff in Senate bill:

"...for grants for highway projects that provide for one or more of the following: safety improvements; crash reduction; support for active transportation; or maintenance. "

I urge replacing this language with:

“for grants that fund pedestrian, cycling and transit improvements.”

The words ‘safety improvements’ and ‘crash reduction’ have often been used to refer to

projects that are really just highway expansions. Countless studies have shown that highway capacity expansions in the name of “efficiency,” “level of service,” “safety,” “crash reduction” or just plain capacity expansion soon lead to increased overall motor vehicle volume through a phenomenon called “induced demand.” Drivers learning of new highway capacity soon increase, not decrease, their use of the expanded capacity and before long congestion has caught up with the new capacity. The people of the Twin Cities — and especially those who do not drive and need or want other options — deserve a virtuous cycle of less driving, not a vicious cycle of induced demand. I ask, Are we serious about controlling climate change? Affordable mobility? Equity in access to jobs, healthcare, goods and services?

If we are serious about climate change, equity and affordable mobility, the last thing the

Metro needs is new money that is able to be used to expand highway capacity, especially if it is through a new source otherwise proposed as a long-overdue dedication for transit after decades of constitutionally-dedicated gas tax restricted “to highway purposes” interpreted to be limited to highway capacity.

It is time to give all people the right to access without damaging the environment, human health or the ability to afford a middle-class life. Highway expansion, however it is labeled or justified, has long been the least sustainable, most expensive and dominant surface transportation policy in Minnesota and the Twin Cities. I urge you to replace the language identified above with my suggestion.

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Sent from my iPhone