

Minnesota House of Representatives



Minnesota State Senate

August 7, 2020

The Honorable Timothy Walz
Governor of the State of Minnesota
130 State Capitol
72 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd
St. Paul, MN 55155

Sent via electronic mail

Dear Governor Walz:

Minnesota is facing significant challenges from COVID-19 that are creating both immediate and longer-term economic damage to Northern Minnesota businesses, residents and our communities. The number of people filing unemployment insurance claims continues to increase as key industries our region depends on have been forced to close or are struggling to remain viable.

Historically, Minnesota has wisely invested in taxpayer-funded projects - approved by the legislature - to create needed jobs and significant economic opportunities to support communities across our state. While there is an even more urgent need for projects that can provide a meaningful impact; efforts by the legislature to approve them continues to come up short.

Recently you said that the “bonding bill is the best economic thing we could do!” Our fear is that it won’t be sufficient to dampen the recession and ongoing hardship in Greater Minnesota. There is an additional way to immediately bring jobs, investment, and economic hope this year to people across Northern Minnesota.

Within the year, the Enbridge Line 3 Replacement Project will begin to invest more than \$2.6 billion private-sector dollars and create more than 4,000 union jobs. In terms of direct investment, Line 3 is bigger than even the largest proposed list of bonding projects. Line 3’s indirect impact magnifies the significance of what this project can do for Minnesota at this critical time.

While all of Minnesota is dealing with the economic impact of COVID-19, it is even more pressing for the 14 counties where Line 3 will be built. The Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) shows the average percentage of people in these 14 “Line 3 Counties” who have filed unemployment insurance claims has increased every week for months and is now close to 24 percent. These communities need the economic lifeline that Line 3 will provide.

While we share your disappointment that the legislative process has failed to approve a list of state-funded capital projects, Line 3 is something that does not need or require any legislative action. The only barrier to being able to see thousands of people get to work is with you and the decisions you will make.

While to many it is frustrating that it has now taken more than five years to review, study, and analyze this project, the result is the most complete evaluation of a pipeline project in Minnesota history. The project has passed every test and meets every standard.

At a time when it seems there is an even greater partisan divide in Minnesota, we have come together from across the political aisle to ask for your support by making sure Line 3 construction starts this year. We represent the people and communities along the route who strongly support this project and have attended meetings, submitted thousands of comments, and who have come together to support the project for more than five years.

All that remains before construction can start are two key decisions that require your action and decision. We implore you to not appeal the PUC's actions on the certificate of need! We also ask you to make sure the MPCA issues the permits so that construction can start this year. We call on you to say YES to Line 3 and NO to any more appeals and delays.

While any agreement on a bonding bill is still uncertain for this year, it is an absolute guarantee that Line 3 construction will happen if you allow it to move forward. In a time of such great uncertainty, you have the authority to give Minnesotans the economic boost they so desperately need!

Please say NO to a Department of Commerce appeal of the project's Certificate of Need and YES to Line 3!-Let's get Minnesota back to work!

Sincerely,



Rep. Dave Lislegard



Sen. Paul Gazelka



Sen. Thomas Bakk



Sen. David Tomassoni



Sen. Paul Utke



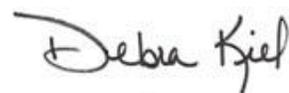
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Rep. Dan Fabian



Sen. Carrie Ruud



Rep. Deb Kiel



Rep. Rob Ecklund



Rep. Julie Sandstede



Rep. Dale Lueck



Sen. Mark Johnson



Rep. Steve Green



Rep. Matt Grossell



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