

Plumbers & Steamfitters Local #11

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December 11, 2024

The Honorable Amit Bose
Administrator of the Federal Railroad Administration
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Re: Minnesota Department of Transportation's (MnDOT) Northern Lights Express (NLX) Project application
for the Federal-State Partnership (FSP) for Intercity Passenger Rail Program

Dear Administrator Bose,

I am writing in support of the Minnesota Department of Transportation's application for the Northern Lights Express Project for the FSP under Federal Railroad Administration (FRA). The NLX Project will improve statewide connectivity and transportation options for travelers, provide economic benefits, relieve congestion, and prepare Minnesota to better address population growth and climate change.

NLX intercity passenger rail service between Minneapolis and the Twin Ports of Duluth, MN, and Superior, WI, will operate on 152 miles of existing tracks owned by BNSF Railway. In addition to rail capacity improvements that will benefit the freight industry and other passenger trains with shared tracks, NLX will provide an alternative to driving for rural and urban communities along the corridor and will be faster than driving during rush hour and inclement weather. NLX will improve traveler choices and system resilience for visiting family and friends, commuting, access to health care, traveling to and from universities, tourism, recreation, and more.

The NLX Project supports MnDOT's Minnesota GO vision as they address climate change, encourage local economic development, improve safety, and increase equity in transportation systems. NLX will increase economic connectivity, support job growth, promote development, and generate new value to real estate leading to increased property tax base around NLX stations and throughout the Corridor. The Project will increase grade-crossing safety, reduce risk of injuries and potential loss of life. NLX service will provide an additional transportation option to a Corridor with limited options and serve residents belonging to underserved and disadvantaged communities.

NLX Project will meet the needs of current and future Minnesotans and Midwest Corridor passengers by increasing transportation connectivity and access, encouraging economic development, relieving congestion, and decreasing greenhouse gas emissions.

On behalf of UA Local 11, I respectfully request that NLX be given full and thoughtful consideration for a Federal-State Partnership grant award. Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely

Jerome Johnson
Business Manager

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