

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 2, 2026

The Honorable Sean Duffy
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Duffy,

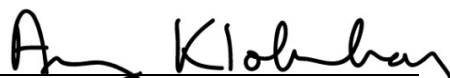
We write in support of executing the amended grant agreement submitted by the Minnesota Department of Transportation and Wisconsin Department of Transportation for \$1.05 billion in awarded funding through the Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) and National Infrastructure Project Assistance (Mega) programs for the Blatnik Bridge replacement project. Execution of the amended grant agreement will allow the Departments to advance to the construction phase of the project.

The Blatnik Bridge carries Interstate Highway 535 and serves an average of 33,000 vehicles per day traveling over the St. Louis Bay. It is essential for freight movement and commercial traffic for not only the Twin Ports of Duluth and Superior, but also for the entire Upper Midwest region. Many businesses and industries in the region rely on the bridge, as the port is a vital shipping center, and commuters, students, and workers also use the bridge to drive to the office, visit friends, and shop. The Port of Duluth-Superior is also the largest U.S. port on the Great Lakes and one of the largest marine gateways for U.S. trade with Canada, one of the top trade partners of Minnesota, Wisconsin and the whole United States.

The Blatnik Bridge has been in service for over sixty years, and in that time, it's fallen into poor condition with significant structural deterioration. This has created serious capacity, mobility, and safety concerns. The awarded funding for the project will replace all structural elements of the bridge and restore the bridge to its original operational condition - improving the safety, efficiency, and reliability of this key regional connection.

With the approval of the Federal Highway Administration, the Minnesota Department of Transportation has issued request for proposal documents for the Blatnik Bridge replacement project. As such, we respectfully request that the amended grant agreement be executed and funding be obligated for the project as soon as possible. Thank you for your attention to this issue.

Sincerely,



Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator



Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator



Tina Smith United States Senator