



The Honorable Amy Klobuchar
United States Senate
425 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

April 6, 2021

Dear Senator Klobuchar,

We write to you today on behalf of the members of the Minneapolis—Duluth/Superior Passenger Rail Alliance in Minnesota and Wisconsin and in support of America's #1 shovel-ready rail project, the Northern Lights Express (NLX), a passenger rail project connecting these two great metropolitan regions.

In 2019, Amtrak's Joe McHugh, vice president of state-supported services, praised the years of work done on the project, and called it "one of the most shovel-ready projects in the nation."

Now, Amtrak has released their enthusiastic response to President Biden's American Jobs Plan, which includes \$80 billion designated specifically for rail. The NLX project is listed as one of 30 new rail corridors and can be seen on Amtrak's map [here](#).

The NLX project has long been supported by cities, counties, a tribal nation, businesses and industry, and many other stakeholders along the rail corridor from Minneapolis to Duluth and Superior. After nearly two decades of visioning, this project is ready to go.

In 2018, the project was awarded a green light with a FONSI (Finding of No Significant Impact) by the Federal Railroad Administration for the final environmental study. NLX is ready to apply for additional federal support to hire crews and complete this important transportation project.

This passenger rail project will support commuters, tourists, students, veterans, seniors, and more who will easily and affordably travel the rail corridor and make connections throughout the Midwest.

With bipartisan support, in October 2020, the Minnesota State Legislature awarded \$3 million to aid in replacing the Grassy Point Bridge – a critical piece of infrastructure for freight and the NLX project, connecting Duluth, Minnesota with Superior, Wisconsin. These dollars will help the project leverage several million dollars more in federal transportation grants. This is only the beginning. We need your help to find additional federal support to complete this important connection. And, we need your help to put NLX in the first group of supported projects in Amtrak's plans.

Minneapolis-Duluth/Superior Passenger Rail Alliance

Administrative Agency: St. Louis & Lake Counties Regional Railroad Authority
Executive Director Bob Manzoline, 111 Station 44 Road, Eveleth, MN 55734
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The NLX project in Minnesota and Wisconsin is ready to go. We are ready to put men and women in the trades to work on the project and we are ready to begin moving people and product throughout the rail corridor. This passenger rail line will connect students to colleges and universities. This rail line will connect thousands of veterans from northern Minnesota and Wisconsin with V.A. healthcare. This will be a connection for tourists and business commuters.

With new state funding, and a new Congress and administration in Washington, D.C., we encourage you to give another look at this project. Please help us engage with our partners at Amtrak and Federal Transportation to move this project into phase one of construction.

In the words of President Biden, “support for rail travel goes beyond the emotional connection. With delays at our airports and congestion on our roads becoming increasingly ubiquitous, volatile fuel prices, increased environmental awareness, and a need for transportation links between growing communities, rail travel is more important to America than ever before.”

We invite you to learn more about the Northern Lights Express Project. We request a meeting with you and your staff to discuss the project and our path forward. We will reach out to your staff in the coming days, or we invite you to contact our team by calling or emailing Bob Manzoline, at 218-744-2653 or bmanzoline@rrauth.com.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,



Jason Serck
NLX Alliance Chair



Andrew Johnson
NLX Alliance Vice chair