



May 28, 2015

Dear Member of the Joint Committee on Finance,

We are writing on behalf of the Coalition for More Responsible Transportation (CMRT) to urge you not to enumerate the expansion of Interstate 94 between 70th and 16th Streets in Milwaukee. This \$850 million expansion is a project that the community does not want, Milwaukee does not need, and Wisconsin simply cannot afford. We encourage you to cut wasteful expansion projects like this one so that we may maintain existing infrastructure and properly invest in crucial local transportation needs -- from road and bridge repair to public transportation.

Our Coalition is composed of more than 25 organizations representing local and state non-profits, businesses, advocacy groups, faith, environmental and justice organizations. For several months, we have been building our case against the proposed expansion of I-94 in the City of Milwaukee. We are proud of the many hundreds of our fellow citizens who have spoken out against this wasteful project, as well as of our partner organizations that have stepped forward.

We appreciate past statements from members of the Committee, questioning whether \$1.3 billion in state bonding or higher taxes and fees would constitute a sustainable solution to our state's transportation funding problems. We agree that some proposed projects should be reexamined and scaled back -- and we encourage you to start right here in Milwaukee, with the unnecessary expansion of I-94.

CMRT is committed to preventing any expansion of the highway between 70th and 16th Streets:

The community does not want it. Hundreds of citizens testified in opposition to this expansion project at the end of 2014, at the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's public hearings. It fails to meet the transportation needs of many Milwaukeeans -- including the elderly, young professionals and vulnerable populations, all of whom are increasingly relying on non-driving modes of transportation to get around.

The Milwaukee region does not need it. Traffic counts along the I-94 East-West Corridor have declined over the past decade, and the safety- and congestion-related concerns identified along this stretch of road by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation could just as well be addressed through more cost-effective solutions, without widening the highway.

Wisconsin just cannot afford it. Were this project to be approved, it would constitute a billion-dollar waste of transportation resources that could be better spent on local road maintenance and growing public transportation needs, statewide. Furthermore, this expansion does little to advance economic growth in the region.

A sustainable solution to Wisconsin's transportation infrastructure crisis must begin by cutting wasteful projects like the expansion of I-94 in Milwaukee. Instead of raising taxes and fees on all Wisconsinites -- or taking our state deeper into debt -- we ask you to bring a better balance to our transportation budget, and to invest in crucial local infrastructure rather than in unjustified highway expansions.

Sincerely,

On behalf of the Coalition for More Responsible Transportation:

Peter Skopec, Director, Wisconsin Public Interest Research Group (WISPIRG)
Rev. Willie Brisco, President, Milwaukee Inner City Congregations Allied for Hope (MICAH)
Fred Royal, President, Milwaukee NAACP
Nino Amato, President/Executive Director, Coalition of Wisconsin Aging Groups (CWAG)
Jeanne B. Hewitt, Director, Community Outreach & Engagement Core, UW-Milwaukee Children's Environmental Health Sciences Core Center
Melech Lensky, Beth Hamedrosh Hagodel Cemetery
Elizabeth Ward, Programs Coordinator, Sierra Club John Muir Chapter
Dianne Dagelen, Chair, Sierra Club Great Water Group
Steve Hiniker, Executive Director, 1000 Friends of Wisconsin
Juan Carlos Ruiz, LULAC Council #332 & Cleaner Milwaukee Coalition
T. Ruth Shank, Co-Chair, Cleaner Milwaukee Coalition
Terry Wiggins, Interfaith Earth Network & Cleaner Milwaukee Coalition
Allen Stasiewski, Waukesha County Environmental Action League
Cheryl Nenn, Milwaukee Riverkeeper
Bill Sell, Milwaukee Transit Services Advisory Committee
Kieth Crum, Milwaukee Transit Riders Union
Ron Wolfe, President, ProRail
James H. Ito, City of Milwaukee Traffic Control Engineer (ret.)
Mary Laan, Chair, Move to Amend of Southeast Wisconsin
Dennis Grzezinski, J.D., Law Office of Dennis M. Grzezinski