



Minnesota Department of Transportation

Office of Freight and Commercial Vehicle Operations

MS 470

395 John Ireland Blvd.

St. Paul, MN 55155-1899

May 4, 2009

The Honorable Collin Peterson
2211 Rayburn – House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

**RE: Minnesota Valley Regional Rail Authority (MVRRA)
Rehabilitation**

Dear Representative:

The purpose of this letter is to express support for the above referenced project for consideration as a High Priority Project (HPP). This Minnesota Valley Regional Rail Authority Federal project request is to rehabilitate the railroad line owned by MVRRA and operated under lease by the Minnesota Prairie Line Railroad Company.

This project request will improve the rail line so trains can operate at 25 mph compared to the current 10 mph. In addition, improvements will be made to public grade crossings in the area. The project has the potential to be the catalyst for economic development by improving the quality of rail service for shippers in the region. The project builds upon previously completed work.

Thank you for the opportunity to express our support for this rehabilitation project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Cecil Selness'.

Cecil Selness

Minnesota Dept. of Transportation

Director, Office of Freight & Commercial Vehicle Operations

MVRRRA

Minnesota Valley Regional Rail Authority
.....5 Counties.....1 Team.....1 Dream!

200 S. Mill Street
PO Box 481
Redwood Falls, MN 56283

507-637-4084 – phone
507-637-4082 – fax

May 4, 2009

Congressman Collin Peterson
2211 Rayburn House office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: High Priority Projects – SAFETEA-LU Funding request

Dear Congressman Peterson:

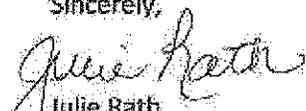
We have submitted for your consideration for "high priority project (HPP) status for the SAFETEA-LU Reauthorization proposals, our request over the next 6 years for a total project cost of \$70,000,000.00. Our immediate request would be for \$25,000,000.00 the first two years and the balance of \$45,000,000.00 over the next four years. We understand that this funding requires a 20% match. We are currently in the State of Minnesota bonding bill for \$5,000,000.00. This funding when approved will be used as our 20% match toward this project. In subsequent years, we will attempt to either secure continued match funds thru the State Bonding bill, or we as the MVRRRA will bond for the funding need to match the federal SAFETEA-LU appropriation funds if secured.

We believe the use of these funding dollars will strengthen our existing economy and the bottom line for all of the shippers along the line. Once the rail line has completed the entire 94 mile rehabilitation, we know due to our location in the Corn Belt in Minnesota, that we can become Minnesota's Renewable Energy Transportation corridor. Currently, renewable biofuels projects, distribution of LNG, and locally grown foods from "state of the art" growth chambers are some of the projects under consideration along our line running through 5 counties in District 7. Retaining the existing job base and the potential to create up to 600 additional new jobs is very real with every mile of rehabilitation that occurs.

Our six-year \$70,000,000.00 will be used to replace, reconstruct, and rehabilitation our track from approximately Milepost 63 to Milepost 146 at Hanley Falls. This includes new rail, ballast, ties, and sub-grade base. This project is shovel ready as the existing rail road track is publically owned by the Minnesota Valley Regional Rail Authority. The improvements will allow for timely and safe transportation of existing commodities such as ethanol, bio-diesel, DDGs, corn, soybeans, vegetables, butter, and other ag and business products to be imported and exported at a reasonable rate via rail to points on the East and West coast and to Canada.

Thank you for continued support for our Minnesota Valley Regional Rail Authority.

Sincerely,


Julie Rath
MVRRRA Administrator