

Date: March 11, 2015

To: The I-35W Solutions Alliance Board of Directors

From: Rob Vanasek

Re: Legislative Report

The governor, lieutenant governor, MnDOT commissioner and Metropolitan Council chair have been holding press conferences around the state in an attempt to highlight various highway and interchange projects that they argue would be funded under the governor's transportation finance package. The road show has had some impact: legislators have shared with me that they have received an increase in constituent contacts related to transportation following these events.

On February 24, the lieutenant governor, MnDOT commissioner, Met Council chair, local mayors, chamber of commerce representatives and adjacent legislators held such a press conference featuring the **I 35W & 494 interchange** reconstruction, which several media outlets reported on. **It was recently ranked by the FHA as the 19th worse bottleneck in the nation.**

At the Capitol

The House has taken off the table a gas tax increase due to the surplus being revised upwards on February 27. I have discussed our legislative agenda with individual legislators and some members of the legislative leadership staff as well as committee staff.

Transportation Committees

The Transportation Committees have been doing overviews of MNDOT, the Met Council and other agencies under their jurisdiction. The Senate reviewed the Office of the Legislative Auditor's 2013 report on noise walls earlier this week.

People

Edina Mayor Jim Hovland was recommended to be the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) Chair on March 6. He has served on the TAB for the last decade. The TAB qualifies the metro area to receive federal funds.

Misc.

2014 transit ridership was up 3.5% across all providers in the seven-county metro area. Total transit ridership in the region in 2014 was 97.7 million rides.