

Date: June 13, 2024

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

From: Rob Vanasek

Re: Legislative Report

The end of the 2024 session was like nothing witnessed previously. The last week saw unprecedented filibustering and culminated in a controversial and acrimonious end to session.

While each legislative session is unique, the 2024 session has an iron grip on the trophy for the strangest in modern times. Coming off a historic first year of the biennium with the DFL in full control of all three branches of state government and able to enact sweeping spending and policy changes, many expected a slower session but it resulted in 52 new chapters of law – the last of which totaled over 1,400 pages and included the Transportation finance omnibus bill.

Most major finance and policy bills were enacted into law but not all. A break in the working relationship between the parties remained and was amplified into the closing days and minutes of session. Without that working relationship producing a global agreement, the House and Senate floor sessions were a new level of chaos right up until the sine die gavel and a bonding bill did not make it across the finish line.

The Speaker had three priorities at the start of session including bonding and while the SRO issue and early tax bill were enacted early on, other issues became concerns and difficult to work through including the threat of Uber and Lyft leaving the state. The compromise and time consumed on the Uber bill contributed to the lack of time for a last minute push for a cash Capitol Investment bill.

The entire House is up for election this fall and 18 members of the House are retiring. These include the Transportation Chair Hornstein, Transportation Republican Lead Petersburg, and several other prominent fiscal (and policy) leaders from that body. One Senate seat special election will be held following the very recent resignation of Kelly Morrison as she seeks retiring Congressman Dean Phillip's seat.

Transportation Finance Omnibus – HF 5242, HF 5247/Chapter 127

The Transportation Finance Omnibus did make into law in that 1,400 page bill (HF 5247) but the stand alone language can be found in the Conference Committee Report for HF 5242. One-time supplemental funds were allocated for various transportation and transit uses, including nearly

\$11M for state road construction including \$1M earmarked to the 169 and Scott CSAH HWY 9 in Jordan. Nearly \$3M will go to staff and operations at driver's license exam stations. \$4.8M was set aside for truck parking safety locations and MnDOT must seek partnerships with local governments.

\$30M was authorized in trunk highway bonds -- \$15M in the Corridors of Commerce program and \$15M in state road construction.

\$15.56M was agreed to for trunk highway and local road projects. Another \$22.5M was set aside for a new state patrol headquarters. \$11.35M was put in the small cities assistance account.

A new Advisory Council on Infrastructure was created to identify and recommend best practices to preserve and extend Minnesota's infrastructure, effectively manage it, coordinate across jurisdictions, focus on asset management, and provide recommendations amongst other responsibilities.

The language from HF 4988, Kraft, addressing greenhouse gas emissions does revise and broaden the language enacted in 2023 and a technical advisory committee will be created to assist in the greenhouse gas emissions impact assessment process.

The Larger Cities Assistance Account has new requirements and limitations on the use of funds.

A red light and speed pilot program was authorized in Minneapolis and Inver Grove Heights.

Metro counties will be able to use funds from the transportation advancement account for debt service on local bonds. Certain BRT project elements like pavement markings will be required to be funded by BRT projects. Metro counties will be required to provide a legislative report every two year on transportation sales tax revenues and uses.

Transportation Policy Omnibus – HF 3436

The Transportation Policy bill did make into law and in Chapter 104. Again, the Towards Zero Deaths program was modified, State Fair transportation planning was instituted and other policy provisions were included in the legislation.

Bonding/Cash Capital Investment

As mentioned above the only major failure of the year was the bonding bill. The super majority of votes needed to pass the bill did not exist for a bonding bill. Instead, there was a cash bill that did pass the House but was passed seconds after the midnight deadline and the President of the Senate ruled the bill did not make it in time. The floor was chaos and the shouting and noise slowed the ability of the chamber to process bills.