

## **In Support of Southwest Light Rail**

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Dear Representative Daudt,

The fact of the matter Rep. Daudt is that you're holding Southwest Light Rail hostage. Last summer and fall I ran for St. Louis Park City Council. I knocked on thousands of doors from May to November, actively seeking resident's thoughts and opinions on my community, including Southwest Light Rail. I can tell you St. Louis Park Residents overwhelmingly support the project. This is a far more representative sample than the divisive minority who have contacted you.

If you were listening to our representatives and the communications that they've received, your 10 to 1 count would be far different. Just because my community is not represented by your caucus does not make our voices count less.

Southwest light rail is more than an investment in the communities along the line – it's an investment in our region. Without this kind of connectivity our region will lose relevance in a future that could look like this <http://mobile.nytimes.com/2016/04/17/opinion/sunday/a-new-map-for-america.html?referer=>

Minnesota needs a comprehensive transportation plan that takes into account the needs of the unique communities throughout our state. That means including all forms of transportation, including light rail.

I urge you to release your hold on Southwest Light Rail and stop holding our transportation infrastructure for ransom.

I'll share a note I sent to my elected officials in January of 2014.

Here's my viewpoint. I'm a bus commuter. I ride the bus daily from St. Louis Park to St. Paul. And, it's not fun or easy. My commute has been at best 45 minutes, and at worst - during some of the coldest weather we've had - 3+ hours. Bus service from St. Louis Park is inadequate and unreliable. SWLRT would provide a reliable commute, run more frequently and with much more comfort.

Secondly, I live in a condo just a few blocks from the proposed Wooddale station. Property values in St. Louis Park have remained high for single family homes, but the same cannot be said for the condo market. I continue to lose value on my investment and because of that lost value and lack of a market, I'm unable to sell my condo and move to a single family home. Something I had pledged to do after five years in my condo. I've now been in my condo for eleven years.

To maintain a thriving community, we need to attract young people - not just young families. The condo market in SLP provides that opportunity - an affordable alternative to purchasing a single family home when a person hasn't yet mapped out their future. And provide them with transportation options that allow them to be car-free. Give them the time in the Park and they'll want to stay there as much as I do.

Final point, I want to stay in St. Louis Park. I have roots there, I know I can be a benefit to my community in many ways. However, I'm seriously considering moving closer to St. Paul because in the three years that I've been commuting by bus, the frustration has only grown.

There has to be a way to get this done and to do it in the best way possible. This is my impassioned plea to the Met Council and my elected officials to not miss this opportunity - to not leave St. Louis Park behind.