



House Republican Leader

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HOUSE REPUBLICANS UNVEIL TRANSPORTATION SOLUTIONS

More Investments in Roads and Bridges

Saint Paul -- (February 20, 2008) -- House Republican Leader Marty Seifert today unveiled a \$7.6 billion plan that invests in Minnesota's state and local transportation system without raising taxes.

"The Republican plan invests more than seven times as much in local road and bridges than the Democrat plan," said House Republican Leader Marty Seifert. "Our plan uses reliable, long-term funding to sufficiently build and maintain our transportation systems without burdening taxpayers and while keeping healthy commitments to other areas of government."

The Republican plan puts \$450 million directly into local roads and bridges as compared to the \$60 million offered by the Democrats. It places \$2.2 billion into state highways as compared to the Democrat plan which \$1.8 billion. It allows for a constitutional amendment for people to vote to authorize GO bonding for state roads and bridges, which opens \$2.7 billion over 10 years for transportation purposes. Finally it provides the Minnesota Department of Transportation with the spending authority they need for the federal funds the state is getting for the I35W bridge collapse.

Republicans looked to wasteful inefficiencies in state government spending as a source of revenue for transportation. Seifert said state government spending continues to grow and the Democrats have yet to look within for the revenue needed to fund priorities.

"The \$34 billion budget and \$2.2 billion surplus last session provided us with the revenue to make these investments. Unfortunately, the push for taxes misplaced fiscal responsibility and transportation funding lost out to increases in welfare spending," Seifert said.

Seifert said the House Republican Caucus is driven by sensible transportation solutions that cultivate accountability measures and analysis for any transportation proposal. The Republican plan authorizes studies to be conducted for the construction and betterment of safe roads and analyze price consequences. It repeals the best value law, and uses the lowest responsible bidder for department construction projects.

The Republican plan will be offered as a Minority Report today. Seifert said House Republicans are committed to reaching a compromise that benefits that state's transportation system without burdening taxpayers.

"Bipartisan compromise means more a simple yes vote on the final bill. The Democrats did not involve Republicans in the development of their proposal, and have spent more time finding five members to override a veto than working with us on a compromise," Seifert said. "Republicans believe the taxpayer deserves to be represented in this debate and will continue our push for increased transportation funding without tax increases."