



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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### **Key Senate Committee Approves Highway 14 Legislation**

This afternoon, the Senate Transportation Budget and Policy Division unanimously approved legislation that will mandate completion of two outstanding environmental impact statements along Highway 14 in southern Minnesota: one from New Ulm to North Mankato, a second from Owatonna to Dodge Center.

“For 13 years, I’ve been coming to the Capitol to talk to you about Highway 14, and for over 40 years we have been working on this project, yet MnDOT still can’t get these environmental impact statements done,” said New Ulm Mayor Joel Albrecht, who testified in support of the legislation. “The only unfinished highway environmental impact statements older than 2 ½ years are on Highway 14. That’s unfair to southern Minnesota communities. The Legislature needs to just get this done.” Joining Mayor Albrecht in testifying for the bill was Brad Meier, the President and CEO of the Owatonna Chamber of Commerce.

The legislation, S.F. 1643, authored by Sen. Kathy Sheran (DFL – Mankato), would require that MnDOT complete the New Ulm – North Mankato and Dodge Center – Owatonna environmental impact statements by December 31, 2009. Once completed, the local communities and businesses along the corridor would be better prepared to begin planning for future growth along the corridor.

Also speaking in favor of the bill during the hearing was Senator Dick Day (R – Owatonna), who offered an amendment to include the bill in the Transportation Committee’s policy omnibus bill. The amendment was approved by voice vote. The transportation omnibus bill, with the Highway 14 language, now moves to the full Senate Finance Committee. Similar legislation was introduced in the House by Rep. Terry Morrow (DFL – St. Peter).

The U.S. highway 14 Partnership is a public-private advocacy organization supporting the four-lane expansion of Trunk Highway 14 in southern Minnesota between New Ulm and Rochester. Formed in 1998, the Highway 14 Partnership lobbies at both the state and federal levels of government.

For more information, please contact J.D. Burton at 651-225-8840 or visit the U.S. Highway 14 Partnership website at [www.ushighway14.com](http://www.ushighway14.com).

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1.1 A bill for an act

1.2 relating to transportation; requiring completion of certain environmental impact  
1.3 statements.

1.4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.5 Section 1. **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT COMPLETION.**

1.6 By December 31, 2009, the commissioner of transportation shall submit the final  
1.7 environmental impact statement to the Federal Highway Administration in the United  
1.8 States Department of Transportation for any project:

1.9 (1) that is a trunk highway construction or reconstruction project on a high-priority  
1.10 or medium-priority interregional corridor; and

1.11 (2) for which an environmental impact statement was started before August 1, 2006.

1.12 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective the day following final enactment.