

Southwest Regional Development Commission



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**Randy L. Jorgenson, AICP
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

November 17, 1998

Docket Clerk
U.S. DOT Dockets
Room PL-401
400 7th St, SW
Washington, DC 20590-0001

OST-98-4146-165

Re: TEA-21 Provision Section 1204 - Statewide Planning, (i) - Participation of Local Elected Officials

With the passage of ISTEA in 1991, Minnesota made a monumental move toward allowing representatives of the eligible funding categories found within the Act to participate in the project selection and funding decision-making process. The vehicle this State used for this new process was the formation of Area Transportation Partnerships (ATP). The make up of the individual ATP's varied by MnDOT District, but the majority have the following representatives: State, City and County Engineers; Transit System Director; Regional Development Organization Official (normally an elected official); and most have at least one other elected official.

Minnesota made a giant first step with the formation of the ATP's. The partners have become more trustful with the process and the "fair share" distribution of the funds. With the passage of TEA-21 on June 9, 1998, Minnesota now needs to make the next step. That is the adjustment in the configuration of the ATP's to provide for elected officials to constitute majority membership on the ATP's; with the technical support of state and local engineers; Economic Development District Regional Transportation Planning Coordinators; state and local transit, trails, historical, and rail staff.

It is our position that the decisions resulting in the expenditure of public proceeds should be made by elected officials, not by staff.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the provisions of TEA-21.

Sincerely,

Randy Jorgenson, AICP
Executive Director

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CC: NADO

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
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DOCKET SECTION