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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-2306

April 21, 2026

Metropolitan Council
360 Robert St. North
St. Paul, MN 55101

Dear Metropolitan Council,

I am writing to you today to express my strong opposition to the proposed Metropolitan (MET) Council's 2026 Regional Solicitation guidance, which provides instructions in the application process to award federal transportation funding to projects in the Twin Cities metropolitan region. I am urging you to withdraw this proposal, which, if adopted, could seriously jeopardize Minnesota's federal funds, including those in the Sixth Congressional District.

After his inauguration, President Donald J. Trump issued several executive orders (EOs) eliminating and prohibiting discriminatory "diversity, equity, and inclusion" (DEI) practices by federal contractors and their subcontractors, ensuring merit-based and efficient contracting and employment and promoting equal treatment under the law for every American.¹ Additionally, on April 24, 2025, U.S. Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy issued a reminder that federal funding must comply with federal guidance and classifications instead of trying to meet DEI goals.² Any recipient of federal funding is obligated to follow federal laws and regulations regarding DEI practices.

However, it has come to my attention that the MET Council—made up entirely of gubernatorial appointees—is in direct violation of the administration's DEI policies in their proposed 2026 Regional Solicitation. Specifically, the "Community Considerations" criterion is a core scoring element this year that ensures projects align with the MET Council's equity, inclusion, and environmental justice goals.³ The criterion draws on multiple MET Council and Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) DEI policies, including Imagine 2050 and the Transportation Policy Plan (TPP), which prioritize "adapting policies, systems, services, and spending so that they contribute to the repair of both historic and ongoing injustice" experienced by "historically marginalized communities," including "people of color, Indigenous people, low income, disabled, youth, and older adult populations."⁴ These DEI criterion currently account for up to 20 percent of the score in several project categories, despite learning that the majority of county commissioners, city elected officials, and a MnDOT representative support limiting Community Considerations to a maximum of 15 percent of the total score.

¹ "Fact Sheet: President Donald J. Trump Addresses DEI Discrimination by Federal Contractors." *The White House*. 26 March 2026. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/fact-sheets/2026/03/fact-sheet-president-donald-j-trump-addresses-dei-discrimination-by-federal-contractors/>.

² "Trump's Transportation Secretary Sean P. Duffy: Follow the Law." *U.S. Department of Transportation*. 24 April 2025. <https://www.transportation.gov/briefing-room/trumps-transportation-secretary-sean-p-duffy-follow-law>.

³ "2026 Regional Solicitation Scoring Criteria and Measures Weighting." *Metropolitan Council*. 13 January 2026. <https://metro council.org/Council-Meetings/Committees/Transportation-Advisory-Board-TAB/2026/January-21,-2026/2026-7.aspx>.

⁴ "Community Considerations." *Metropolitan Council*. <https://metro council.org/Transportation/Planning-2/Transportation-Funding/Regional-Solicitation/Applying-for-Regional-Solicitation-funds/Applications/2026-Draft-PDF-Regional-Solicitation-Applications/2026RsComCons.aspx>.

My office was also informed that MET Council declined a county's request for the U.S. Department of Transportation to review the guidance criteria to ensure federal compliance. As stewards of our state's transportation funds, you have a fiduciary duty to Minnesotans to ensure you are following the letter of the law over personal DEI interests.

I am deeply concerned by the MET Council's proposed 2026 Regional Solicitation guidance and the danger it poses to Minnesota's federal transportation funding. As the Representative of Anoka and Carver County, I strongly urge you not to adopt this proposal as a final measure in your vote on April 22, 2026, in order to ensure Minnesota continues to receive critical federal transportation funds.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tom Emmer". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Tom Emmer
Member of Congress