

Federal reps praise U.S. Highway 53 decision

JOURNAL STAFF REPORT

Citing concerns about the potential impact, Borderland's federal representatives this week praised a decision by the Minnesota Department of Transportation to end further study of a proposed westerly route for relocation of U.S. Highway 53.

8th District Congressman Rick Nolan, a member of the House Transportation Committee, said Monday that the decision is contained in a just released MnDOT report concluding that the additional expense, commuter disruption, delay to emergency services and first responders, and negative effect on local jobs and businesses would be too great for the agency to spend additional time or money pursuing the highly controversial and widely criticized option.

“MnDOT listened to local people and made a commonsense decision not to put jobs, businesses, and citizen safety at risk,” Nolan said in a statement. “Months ago, I toured this project, and called the western route a non-starter from the very beginning – an ill-advised plan that would have cost jobs, millions of additional tax dollars, and disrupted emergency responses.”

U.S. Sens. Amy Klobuchar and Al Franken also



FILE PHOTO

Trucks work to expand to four lanes nine miles of U.S. Highway 53 from the Rice River to the south city limits of Cook earlier this month. Here, the construction is taking place on the northbound lane. The plan is to complete the northbound lane including a new bridge crossing the Rice River during this construction season and then complete the southbound lanes during the 2014 season.

commended the decision in a joint statement.

In July, Klobuchar and Franken held a meeting in Virginia with a Highway 53 impact committee and members of the Virginia City Council to discuss the potential safety and economic impact of the proposed westerly route.

“(Monday’s) decision is a positive step toward find-

ing a route for Highway 53 that doesn't needlessly increase driving time and jeopardize public safety," Klobuchar said. "I will continue to work with MnDOT to ensure the final project meets the needs of the region while taking into account the economic needs and concerns of residents."

Franken said relocation of Highway 53 is a great

concern to residents, businesses, and community leaders in the Quad Cities, which is why he pressed MnDOT to take the westerly reroute off the table.

"I'm very pleased to hear that, as this process continues, the westerly option will not be included in the plans," he said. "Moving forward, I will keep working to ensure that the final

route selection is the best choice for the region.”

Nolan noted that federal dollars will pay for a good share of the project, which will involve relocating the part of Highway 53 from the Highway 135 interchange and the Second Avenue traffic loop by 2017.

The proposal, which drew widespread opposition from across the Iron

Range, would have substantially increased commuter and emergency response times between Virginia and Eveleth, diverted traffic away from local businesses, and required local schools to spend an estimated \$4 million annual in additional transportation costs, according to Nolan.

Late last winter, Nolan invited MnDOT Commissioner, Charlie Zelle, to tour the proposed westerly route, one of six then being considered, and then meet with local business people, elected officials and citizens at the MnDOT building in Virginia. After several additional meetings and conversations with Zelle, Nolan met in early July with concerned citizens in Mountain Iron, receiving a detailed local study of the potential problems and costs.

Later in July, Nolan, invited three top-ranking federal transportation officials to his Washington office and urged them to “stop wasting money” studying or pursuing the Westerly Route. He had a final meeting with Zelle in early August.

Nolan also praised the advocacy and leadership from state Reps. Jason Metsa and Carly Melin, and state Sen. David Tomassoni, as well as the support provided by Franken and Klobuchar on the issue.

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9th: Cereal Bar, String Cheese, Citrus Fruit Cup

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11th: Western Omelet Quesadilla w/Salsa, Potato Rounds, Fresh Pear

12th: Scrumptious Coffecake, Sunrise Smoothie, Graham Crackers

13th: Biscuit & Gravy, Apricots

16th: Oatmeal Breakfast Round, Banana

17th: Waffles w/Syrup, Sausage Links, Mandarin Orange

18th: Breakfast Sundae, Raisins

19th: Whole Grain Cheese Pizza, Fresh Mixed Fruit Cup

20th Breakfast Bake w/Tomato Salsa, Toast, Grapes

23rd: Pumpkin Chocolate Chip Muffin, Cereal, Orange

24th: Pancake on a Stick w/Syrup, Tri-Tater

25th: Quick Blueberry Bubble Bread, Sliced Peaches

26th: Biscuit Breakfast Sandwich, Rosy Applesauce

27th: Excellent Egg Taco w/Salsa, Yogurt Cup, Pineapple Chunks

30th: Aloha Muffin Square, Cereal & Grapes

ISD 361—September 2013 LUNCH MENU




Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
<p>Lunch Prices</p> <p>Elementary \$2.00</p> <p>Secondary \$2.10</p> <p>Reduced \$4.0</p> <p>Adult \$3.50</p>	<p>3 Chicken Wrap Romaine & Tomato Mix Spanish Rice Steamed Carrots Tropical Fruit Fruit Choice Milk</p>	<p>4 Pig in a Blanket Potato Wedges Broccoli w/Cheese Fresh Apple Jello Fruit Choice Milk</p>	<p>5 Spaghetti w/Meat Sauce Garden Spinach Salad Seasoned Peas (9-12) French Garlic Bread (9-12) Fresh Grapes Fruit Choice Milk</p>	<p>6 Taco Salad Tortilla Chips & Salsa Refried Beans Cinnamon Puff Pineapple Tidbits Fruit Choice Milk</p>
<p>9 Hamburger on a Bun Lettuce & Tomato Sweet Potato Fries Fruit Cocktail Rice Krispy Bar Fruit Choice Milk</p>	<p>10 Chicken Nuggets Mashed Potatoes/ Gravy Fresh Broccoli Wheat Roll & Jelly (6-12) Strawberries /Bananas Fruit Choice Milk</p>	<p>11 Chili Corn Chips Celery & Cucumbers Cinnamon Roll Orange Smiles Fruit Choice Milk</p>	<p>12 Baked Ham Two Potato Mash Green Beans Angel Biscuit & Jelly Fresh Kiwi Fruit Choice Milk</p>	<p>13 Macaroni & Cheese Meat Balls Seasoned Peas Fresh Baby Carrots Whole Wheat Bread & Jelly Apple Wedges Fruit Choice Milk</p>
<p>16 Hot Ham & Cheese On a Bun Potato Wedges Fresh Broccoli Fresh Grapes Chocolate Chip Cookie Fruit Choice Milk</p>	<p>17 Pepperoni Pizza Tossed Salad w/ Romaine Garlic Bread Stick w/Marinara Sauce Fresh Banana Fruit Choice Milk</p>	<p>18 Taco Burger on Bun Lettuce & Tomato Refried Beans Black Bean & Corn Salsa w/ Tortilla Chips Sliced Pears Fruit Choice Milk</p>	<p>19 Italian Pasta Bake Green Pepper Strips & Fresh Baby Carrots Whole Wheat Bread & Jelly (9-12) Applesauce Brownie Fruit Choice Milk</p>	<p>20 Chicken Pattie Mashed Potatoes & Gravy Green Beans Wheat Roll & Jelly (6-12) Orange Wedges Fruit Choice Milk</p>
<p>23 Beef & Cheese Burrito Romaine & Tomato Mexican Corn Salsa & Tortilla Chips Apple Wedges Fruit Choice Milk</p>	<p>24 Stromboli Garden Spinach Salad Fresh Carrots Fresh Strawberries Fruit Choice Milk</p>	<p>25 BBQ Beef on a Bun Sweet Potato Puffs Baked Beans Orange Smiles Oatmeal Cookie Fruit Choice Milk</p>	<p>26 Turkey & Cheese Hoagie Lettuce & Tomato Oven Fries Sliced Peaches Graham Snacks (9-12) Fruit Choice Milk</p>	<p>27 Country Style Beef Pattie Mashed Potatoes/Gravy Steamed Broccoli Wheat Roll & Jelly (6-12) Banana Fruit Choice Milk</p>
<p>30 Taco Soup Tortilla Chips Fresh Broccoli Sliced pears Snickerdoodle Fruit Choice Milk</p>	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;">   <div style="text-align: center; flex-grow: 1;"> <h2 style="font-family: cursive;">Welcome Back!</h2> </div>  </div>			

Offer-vs-Serve is designed to decrease plate waste and reduce food cost while maintain nutritional integrity of the lunch. Students are offered five required food items: meat/meat alternate, milk, grains/breads, fruits, vegetables. Students are required to select three of the five items with one of the items being either the fruit or vegetable component.

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 Sue Karnisa, Food Service Director
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