

Thank you Congressman Sabo.

Standing here, in this remarkable facility—the heart of Light Rail Line operations—I am proud to say Minnesota is truly moving forward on this project with foresight and wisdom.

Building this light rail line—which I hope will be just the first leg of an extended network of transit lines—means we're helping build a healthy, vital state.

By investing in mass transit, we lend support to so many other economies and services that help our citizens.

For instance:

- We improve the competitive position of our state.
- We support Smart Growth.
- We create multi-modal transportation to get people and goods around the state.
- We do our part to reduce traffic congestion, which means a cleaner environment and a lot fewer commuter headaches.
- We help create a better environment to grow business.
- We not only give our residents better access to needed transportation, but we provide visitors to our great state transportation to some of our most prized destinations in the metropolitan area.

I am proud to stand here today, at this historic moment in Minnesota history, and help drive the First Golden Spike of the Hiawatha Light Rail Line.

Let this be a symbol of a strong and decisive resolve to continue moving this state forward on all fronts—especially transportation because it is so vital to improving our economy, accessibility to jobs and our environment.