

Rep. Vruwink: Tourism season demands increased safety in construction zones

Posted on Tuesday, Jun 12, 2018

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE Contact: Rep. Don Vruwink

June 12, 2018 608-266-3790

Rep. Don Vruwink (D-Milton) sent the following letter to Wisconsin Department of Transportation Secretary David Ross today:

June 12, 2018

Dave Ross, Secretary, Wisconsin Department of Transportation

P.O. Box 7910, Madison, WI 53707-7910

Dear Secretary Ross:

I'm writing to share my constituents' and my concerns about hazardous driving conditions on I-90/39 in construction zones between Illinois and Madison, specifically, the lack of shoulders along the roadway where the concrete barriers are. This allows no room for drivers to pull off in an emergency. The lack of shoulders makes it difficult for emergency vehicles to get to the scene of an accident and for tow trucks to clear the roadway. One of my constituents witnessed cranes removing a crashed semi from the roadway while traffic was backed up for miles.

I want to thank you for the Department's decision to reduce the speed limit to 55 mph in construction zones, but more needs to be done. I drive frequently from the

Newville onramp to Madison and I have driven in torrential downpours where it would be wise to pull off to the side of the road, but there is no side of the road to pull off to. A student intern of mine was at a standstill in traffic for 1.5 hours while trying to get from Milton to Madison. That was the day of the six-car crash. I'm sure you have heard many similar stories of stalled traffic and dangerous driving conditions. This is unacceptable, and will only get worse when the tourism season gets into high gear.

Here are some other complaints I have heard from my constituents:

§ The turn-around area between Exit 160 and the Janesville rest stop has been blocked by concrete barriers, further limiting the ability of emergency vehicles and tow trucks to get to accident scenes.

§ State Troopers should have a stronger presence in order to slow down traffic.

§ A DOT spokesman said in a TV interview that passenger vehicles need to defer to semi drivers. It should be the other way around. Semis are much more of a safety threat than passenger vehicles.

Please see the enclosed email for the full list from one of my constituents who sees firsthand the hazardous conditions on a daily basis. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

DON VRUWINK

State Representative

43rd Assembly District