

U.S. Sen. Baldwin: Continues to push for federal funding to rebuild the Blatnik Bridge

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senators Tammy Baldwin (D-WI), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), and Tina Smith (D-MN) and Representative Pete Stauber (R-MN-08) are urging Transportation Secretary Buttigieg to support Wisconsin and Minnesota’s application for federal funding to rebuild the Blatnik Bridge.

“We write to reiterate our strong support of the Minnesota and Wisconsin Department of Transportations’ application for federal funding through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law,” **wrote the lawmakers.** “By replacing the Blatnik Bridge, the project would exemplify the type of critical infrastructure project that was envisioned by Congress.”

“As noted in our previous letter to President Biden in September 2023, the Blatnik Bridge, located over St. Louis Bay on Lake Superior, is one of two bridges that connects the cities of Duluth, Minnesota with Superior, Wisconsin,” **the lawmakers continued.** “It is an essential economic engine in the region and a key link in the global supply chain.”

Earlier this month, Senator Baldwin [called](#) on the Biden Administration to support the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT)’s application for federal funding to rebuild the critical bridge. In September, Senator Baldwin and a bipartisan group of eight Minnesota and Wisconsin legislators sent a [letter](#) to President Biden urging him to fund this project.

The full text of the letter is available [here](#) and below.

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

We write to reiterate our strong support of the Minnesota and Wisconsin Departments of Transportation's application for federal funding through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. This federal funding will improve the condition of major bridges across the country. By replacing the Blatnik Bridge, the project would exemplify the type of critical infrastructure project that was envisioned by Congress.

As noted in our letter to President Biden in September 2023, the Blatnik Bridge, located over St. Louis Bay on Lake Superior, is one of two bridges that connects the cities of Duluth, Minnesota with Superior, Wisconsin. The Bridge carries Interstate Highway 535 and over 33,000 vehicles per day. It is an essential economic engine in the region and a key link in the global supply chain. Each year, 265,000 trucks transporting nearly \$4 billion in goods pass over the bridge. Many businesses and industries in the region also rely on the bridge to reach the Port of Duluth-Superior, the largest U.S. port on the Great Lakes and North America's farthest-inland freshwater seaport.

However, the bridge is over sixty years old and has reached the end of its useful service life. It is in poor condition with significant structural deterioration, creating serious capacity, mobility, and safety concerns. Funding from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law would be used to replace the Blatnik Bridge. Specifically, the project would replace all structural elements of the bridge, address safety concerns at bridge interchanges, and restore the bridge to its original operational condition. These improvements to the bridge would significantly enhance the safety, efficiency, and reliability of this key regional connection. Completing this project would support the needs of Minnesotans and Wisconsinites by improving and modernizing the regional transportation network in northeast Minnesota and northwest Wisconsin.

Thank you again for your attention to the Minnesota and Wisconsin Departments of Transportation's application for funding.

Sincerely,

An online version of this release is available [here](#).