

Wednesday April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2013

**Testimony by Bob DeBoer to the Senate Transportation and Public Safety Division of the Finance Committee (Minnesota Legislature)**

In the 2005, a Citizens League study committee produced a transportation finance report titled “Driving Blind.” One of the recommendations was that Minnesota should make strategic investments with small amounts of funding to public/private partnerships to invest in pilot projects and to test demand for a variety of options.

Two of the things we specifically mentioned were:

- Incentives for telecommuting on an organization-wide level.
- Test the opportunities throughout Minnesota for communications technology to replace travel.

This report was the impetus for Citizens League involvement in bringing the Urban Partnership Agreement to Minnesota. The eWorkPlace initiative was just the type of approach that we were looking for. One that tested incentives for telecommuting on an organization-wide level in many different organizations.

As Mr. Lari has stated, the test showed overwhelmingly positive results that are documented in the report that you have “Exceeding Expectations.”

When we consider the negative impacts of congestion and roads that are crumbling from overuse, telework provides the most direct and efficient way to reduce those negative impacts by actually eliminating trips that would have otherwise took place.

But it wasn't just the work trips that were eliminated. Evaluation showed that eWorkPlace participants also avoided making an additional 11,350 trips per week as other travel choices and needs were affected by telework.

That's why we think that continuing eWorkPlace is a highly efficient use of our transportation dollars.

The 9-1 return on saved time and reduced vehicle costs is also a direct representation of reductions in road use and road impact.

eWorkPlace also revealed that many more employers than originally expected would be willing to implement effective telecommuting policies with their employees if providing the key information, training and tools to effectively measure the implementation and results.

These initial eWorkPlace results make it clear that telecommuting can have a large impact on congestion and overall road use than any other single approach.