



Environmental Justice Groups Object to WisDOT's Discriminatory Failure to Include Transit in Zoo Interchange Plans

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MILWAUKEE, WI – On Monday April 4, three organizations supporting racial and environmental justice - the American Civil Liberties Union of Wisconsin, the Black Health Coalition of Wisconsin, and Midwest Environmental Advocates - filed comments opposing the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's efforts to again expand highway access - to the tune of hundreds of millions of dollars - at the same time the state is trying to cut transit spending.

"WisDOT, and the state of Wisconsin, get federal money, so they must follow Title VI of the Civil Rights Act," noted ACLU-WI Senior Staff Attorney Karyn Rotker. "And that federal law means they can't run their transportation program in ways that have the effect of discriminating against people of color, regardless of whether they are intentionally discriminating. And the state's transportation funding and policy decisions are clearly having a discriminatory effect."

"In our region, people of color - especially African-Americans and Latinos - are much more likely to depend on transit than non-minorities. Allowing highway projects to move forward while transit moves backwards reduces their opportunities and segregates them even more from jobs, medical care, and other needs," added Black Health Coalition of Wisconsin President/CEO, Dr. Patricia McManus.

"WisDOT needs to go back to the drawing board," said Dennis Grzezinski, Midwest Environmental Advocates' senior counsel. "They need to come up with a multi-modal plan that integrates transit as well as highways, to ensure that all residents of our region receive a fair share of the benefits of state transportation system investments."

A copy of the groups' comments is attached.

The ACLU of Wisconsin has approximately 7,000 members who support its efforts to defend the civil liberties and civil rights of all Wisconsin residents. For more on the work of the ACLU of Wisconsin, visit our [webpage](#). You can also get news and opinion on civil liberties in Wisconsin on our [Cap City Liberty blog](#). Find us on [Facebook and Twitter at ACLUMadison and ACLUofWisconsin](#).

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