

400 grassroots leaders gather at ISAI AH's Transportation and Jobs Rally

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St. Paul, MN - More than 400 citizens from across Minnesota gathered Monday night at Mt. Olivet Baptist Church to send a message back to Washington with their members of congress.

"We need a public transit system that helps people get to where jobs actually are," said East Side St. Paul Resident Junail Anderson. "I just want to work and ensure a better life for my children."

In attendance to hear the moving testimony of concerned Minnesotans were Congressman Keith Ellison, and staff from the offices of Congressman Oberstar, Senator Klobuchar, Congressman Eric Paulsen, and Senator Al Franken.

"This is about providing equal access to jobs through efficient funding of public transit," said Lisa Amman, lead organizer with host organization ISAI AH. "When we the people make a public investment in our transit system, we must make sure that the system is working for all residents – not just a few."

Also released at the meeting were findings from a new report by ISAI AH, PolicyLink, and Organizing Apprenticeship Program that revealed:

- Gross underrepresentation of minorities and women in 2900 jobs created by newly funded transit programs.
- Not nearly enough dollars have been allocated for new public transit systems
- Lack of transparent reporting by MNDOT on the goals of achieving minority, and disadvantaged business participation.

This grassroots rally was one of many cosponsored by Transportation Equity Network (TEN) that are scheduled to take place across the country over the next month. "The goal of these rallies is to ensure that there is equality in the transportation reauthorization bill," said TEN Executive Director Laura Barrett.

Additional rallies are scheduled for Los Angeles, CA (9/23); and St Louis, MO (10/10).