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Contact: Steve Hiniker

608.320.5569

Court Blocks Highway 23 Expansion

1000 Friends of Wisconsin Calls on Lawmakers to Fund Safety Improvements Immediately

A Federal District Court rejected Wisconsin Department of Transportation arguments that widening State Highway 23 between Plymouth and Fond du Lac is needed because of future traffic demands. On Friday, April 29, Judge Lynn Adelman said that the agency was unable to demonstrate that its projections for future traffic were reasonable.

Judge Adelman's ruling means that the stalled highway project is ineligible for federal funds.

"We call on legislators to immediately fund safety improvements on Highway 23 now that we have again shown that the Wisconsin DOT is wasting money on unneeded highway expansion projects," said Steve Hiniker of 1000 Friends of Wisconsin.

"A wider highway is not a safer highway. Widening the highway would lead to higher speeds and more severe crashes, especially at the numerous intersections along the 19 mile stretch of rural road. Legislators should stop claiming that the planned expansion would be safer. They need to accept a wider highway is not needed but a safer highway is needed."

"The plans to widen Highway 23 have never been about safety. Plans to widen Highway 23 don't meet the criteria for federal funds because the state is unable to prove that there is a need for a wider highway," added Hiniker.

1000 Friends of Wisconsin said that they are strongly in support of making safety improvements "immediately."

"We call on the legislature to go into special session next week to allocate the funds needed to make safety improvements on the highway so that these improvements can be made this summer," concluded Hiniker.

Link to court decision: www.1kfriends.org/major-court-decision-hwy-23-project/

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