

## **David Senjem: Hwy. 14 improvements were an accomplishment of '22**

*The following was written by Minnesota State Senator David Senjem and was featured in an opinion column in the Post Bulletin on January 4, 2022.*

I think it would be safe to say that many who read this have had an encounter while driving along old U.S. Highway 14 that you won't ever forget. It has been a goal for over 30 years to complete the safety improvements and the expansion of Highway 14 from New Ulm to Rochester. The highway is notorious for being incredibly dangerous, and that is why I and many others in recent years have worked very hard to complete this incredibly important safety initiative.

As nearly all who read this know, Highway 14 experiences extremely heavy truck traffic, and the expansion of the highway from two lanes to four lanes opens commerce across southern Minnesota. It creates safe routes to connect between other major highway corridors across within our area. The new expansion contributes to more accessible and safer access for farmers to transport their grain to barges on the Mississippi River and for local businesses to quickly receive and ship their products.

The recently completed 12.5-mile segment from Dodge Center to Owatonna was monumental and creates a continuous four-lane road between Mankato and Rochester. It improves capacity, safety, travel times, and access between Rochester and Owatonna and the Interstate 35 corridor.

Closer to Rochester, I am fighting hard to fund a new Highway 14 and County Road 104 interchange in the upcoming legislative session. This intersection has significant safety concerns due to an at-grade railroad crossing, the high speeds traveled on Highway 14, and significant car and truck traffic volumes on County Road 104. Creating safer roads and highways is a constant challenge and this one is of utmost importance.

Increasing safety along Highway 14 has been a long-standing goal. Although it has happened in increments, I am incredibly proud of the work of so many through the years to get us to where we are today.

I hope that each of you have a happy and prosperous new year. If you have thoughts, questions or concerns about any policy matter, please do not hesitate to contact me by email at [sen.david.senjem@senate.com](mailto:sen.david.senjem@senate.com) or you can call me directly at 507-319-7627. It is my honor to serve you.

*Sen. David Senjem represents Rochester in the Minnesota Senate.*