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**Contact: Molly Collins, ACLU of Wisconsin, media@aclu-wi.org
Dennis Grzezinski, Law Office of Dennis M Grzezinski, 414 530-9200**

Three Environmental Justice Groups Ask Court to Block I-94 Expansion

MILWAUKEE: Today, organizations supporting racial and environmental justice – the NAACP Milwaukee Branch, Sierra Club John Muir Chapter, and Milwaukee Inner-City Congregations Allied for Hope (MICAHA) – filed suit in federal court in Milwaukee, seeking to block the Wisconsin Department of Transportation’s efforts to spend over \$1 billion dollars to rebuild and expand I-94 between 16th and 70th Streets when it is refusing to include necessary public transit expansion as part of the project.

“Spending billions of dollars on one extravagant highway expansion project after another, while transit services and funding keep getting cut, reduces the ability of many Milwaukee residents, particularly persons of color, to access employment, education, health care and other activities,” said Fred Royal, NAACP Milwaukee Branch President.

“One of MICAHA’s biggest concerns is the extreme and unacceptable rate of joblessness in the central city, for persons of color in general and African-American men in particular,” stated Pastor Marilyn Miller, MICAHA President. “We all know that people of color depend on transit to get to work at all. We need more transit – to more places where the jobs are – not just highways that don’t help these members of our community get to work.”

“Expanding highways while support for transit declines also hurts our air quality, which is a health and environmental justice issue that concerns the Sierra Club,” said Bill Davis, Sierra Club John Muir Chapter Director.

The plaintiffs are represented by the American Civil Liberties Union of Wisconsin Foundation and by Milwaukee Attorney Dennis M Grzezinski. A copy of the lawsuit is available at <http://aclu-wi.org/media/three-environmental-justice-groups-ask-court-block-i-94-expansion>

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