



House Transportation Committee

IN SUPPORT- SB 2121

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Chairman Ruby and members of the House Transportation Committee, my name is Janelle Moos, Advocacy Director for AARP North Dakota. I appreciate your time today.

Before I get into our support for this bill, I'd like to spend just a moment reminding you who we are and why we are here. AARP is a nonpartisan, nonprofit, nationwide organization with nearly 38 million members. 86,000 of those members live in North Dakota – a staggering number when you consider the overall population of our state.

A lot of issues touch older Americans and their ability to live safe, independent and healthy lives. Most of our work fits into three areas; helping people choose where they live, remain financially secure and access affordable health care.

AARP North Dakota is supporting a "Primary Belt Law" to enhance seat belt use among North Dakota drivers to reduce crash-related deaths. AARP at the State and local levels supports the efforts of *Vision Zero* to reduce deaths on our roadways. We have participated in a broad working group that consists of safety advocates, county officials, legislators, and law enforcement to evaluate and propose measures to enhance safe driving.

As some of you know, AARP also has volunteers who teach AARP Smart Driver Courses across the country and a number here in North Dakota aimed at helping older drivers stay safe on the road. According to the National Safety Council, seat belts save lives. They are the single most effective traffic safety device to prevent death and injury in a motor vehicle crash. That's why one of the important parts

of that course is the section on safety. The first point on safety is devoted to safety belts and the importance of wearing them every time, no matter the distance. SB 2121 works toward decreasing motor vehicle crash deaths in North Dakota and research shows other states that have implemented such a law have seen crash deaths decrease.

Thank you for listening and we urge you to give SB 2121 a DO Pass Recommendation.