

**SB 2094:
North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department
Senate Transportation Committee
Fort Totten Room, 2:00 PM
Thursday, January 7, 2021**

Good afternoon Chairman Clemens and members of the committee, my name is Anton Hillig, Motorized Recreation Coordinator for the North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department. I am testifying on behalf of the Department in support of SB 2094 which requests a clerical change to N.D.C.C. §39-29-10.

The North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department (NDPRD) has the responsibility to conduct the youth off-highway vehicles (OHV) safety course as described in N.D.C.C. §39-29-10. SB 2094 aligns the responsibility for subsequent issuance of a safety certificate also to the NDPRD, as is the current and historical practice. The department has conducted the state's OHV youth safety program since 1989 with internal records of certificate issuance since 2003.

The department continues to conduct OHV safety training for youth ages 12-15 as prescribed by the Director of the NDPRD and in accordance with the American Safety Institute for All-Terrain Vehicles. While we do honor adjacent state certifications, the two prescribed courses for North Dakota are the hands-on course instructed by the Motorized Recreation Coordinator in our local communities or the online version of the course presented by Fresh-Air educators specifically for the residents of North Dakota (66% of course attendance).

As an example of course completion, the 19-21 Biennium saw 646 youth certified through our instruction courses with completion certificates issued by the Director of the NDPRD. In FY 20 alone, we conducted eleven (11) in-person courses totaling 97 students, which is our preferred method of instruction as it engages partnerships with local law enforcement, strengthens community outreach, and exercises our partnership with the Jake Star Foundation.

Regardless of the safety instruction method, once youth complete and pass the course material, graduates are currently issued a safety certificate by our department. Currently, the Century Code assigns the responsibility of issuing a safety certificate to the North Dakota Department of Transportation (NDDOT), however as stated previously NDPRD has been issuing the certifications once courses are completed and passed.

Returning certificate issuance to the NDDOT as described in the current N.D.C.C. would limit NDPRD centralized tracking and distribution of certificates and consequently delay the timely reception of safety certificates that are a requirement for youth to ride in our state.

At present, in practice, the OHV youth safety program responsibility rests solely with the NDPRD. In a continued effort to streamline our processes and provide our citizens with the best customer service, we request to retain the responsibility for issuing OHV safety certificates and cement this practice with amending N.D.C.C. §39-29-10 to reflect current practice.

Mr. Chairman this concludes my remarks; I would be pleased to answer any questions the committee may have. Thank you for your time and consideration.