

Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee. I'm Brad Schaffer, director of Driver and Vehicle Services for the North Dakota Department of Transportation. I'm here in support of Senate Bill 2133.

Senate Bill 2133 proposes a new blackout license plate as an option for owners of passenger motor vehicles, trucks not exceeding 20,000 pounds, and motorcycles. Blackout license plates have a solid black background with white lettering.

Other states have successfully created blackout license plates, and they have been incredibly popular with vehicle owners. For example, Iowa introduced a similar plate and in the first three years, they issued nearly 500,000 blackout license plates, making it the most popular special plate in the state. Minnesota also experienced remarkable success issuing over 250,000 blackout plates in the first year, exceeding their projections by more than 56%. These plates provide vehicle owners with a sleek, bold, and modern look, which many find appealing.

In North Dakota, we estimate that there are 760,967 qualifying vehicles, in addition to 42,298 motorcycles, whose owners could potentially benefit from this new plate option. Due to the uncertainty of how many applications there will be for the new plate, for the fiscal note it was estimated that 10% of the eligible vehicles for 2025-27 biennium and 5% for the 2027-29 biennium would purchase the new plate. The revenue received for the additional cost of the plate would be deposited into the Highway Tax Distribution Fund. The expenditures for the plate will be \$7.00 for production and \$6.20 for shipping for the full-size plate. The motorcycle plate cost will be \$5.95 for production and \$1.43 for shipping.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes my testimony. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.