

**HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS – Education & Environment Division
March 3, 2021 – 3:15 p.m. – Prairie Room**

**North Dakota Department of Transportation
Jolene Rieck, PLA, Executive Staff Officer**

Testifying in Support of SB 2018

Good morning Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. I'm Jolene Rieck, the Executive Staff Officer for the North Dakota Department of Transportation. I'm here to testify on behalf of the agency to support SB 2018.

The North Dakota Department of Transportation (NDDOT), Department of Commerce and the Northern Plains UAS Test Site are deploying Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) technologies through USDOT's Integration Pilot Program (IPP). Recently, the North Dakota Department of Transportation was awarded an extension to the IPP program. The new IPP program is called "BEYOND" and the North Dakota Department of Transportation along with the Northern Plains UAS Test Site are working toward the safe implementation of UAS operations and technologies throughout the State of North Dakota.

The USDOT states that there are over 1.7 million Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) currently registered in the United States. North Dakota DOT's partnership with Department of Commerce and the Northern Plains UAS Test Site is critical in the advancement of UAS operations in North Dakota. VANTIS is the program working in this partnership to expand development of a state-wide UAS network remote ground control infrastructure.

The Department of Transportation will continue to utilize UAS technology for flood fighting efforts, bridge and tower inspections, land surveys, stockpile inventories, and other operating needs of the agency. This allows our agency to work more effectively and efficiently to safely move people and goods throughout North Dakota.

As a partner to the Department of Commerce and the UAS Test Site, the North Dakota Department of Transportation supports the language in SB2018. I stand for any questions. Thank you.