



**Testimony on State Transportation Funding for North Dakota  
North Dakota House Appropriations  
U.S. Highway 85 between Watford City and Interstate 94 at Belfield**

**Representative Vigessa, Chairman Government Operations Division  
Jeff Delzer, Chairman House Appropriations**

Thank you very much for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of the North Dakota Department of Transportation 2021-2023 Biennium Budget and to share the thoughts of the Theodore Roosevelt Expressway Association (TREA) on the need for transportation funding. The Association has long been a supporter of increasing statewide transportation funding and particularly western North Dakota and U.S. Highway 85 on the Theodore Roosevelt Expressway (TRE). As you know, TRE is a High Priority Corridor on the National Highway System that serves as a backbone to energy production in North Dakota as well as connection across North America. TRE is the northern portion of the Ports-to-Plains Corridor connecting Canada and Mexico through North Dakota.

The 2021-2023 Biennium is an opportunity not only to make infrastructure improvements but to make an economic stimulus to the North Dakota economy post-COVID. TREA urges you to approve the DOT budget in full.

Specifically, for TREA, the 2021-2023 Biennium is an opportunity to make progress on the expansion of the U.S. 85 on the Theodore Roosevelt Expressway. Currently, SB 2012 includes a renewed commitment made by the 66<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly for a \$50 million appropriation for U.S. Highway 85 that is contingent on receiving matching federal funds that may become available. The opportunity for those federal funds in the next two-year period is greater than in the previous two-year period. Not only was the FAST Act extended to September 2021 providing an additional round of both BUILD and INFRA grants, the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress must reauthorize the federal transportation programs and is considering a significant infrastructure bill. Discretionary grants, congressionally designated spending and one-time infrastructure funding all could provide the needed investment to beneficially use the \$50 million for improvements on U.S. Highway 85. We urge this committee to support the Contingent Loan Authorization - Contingent Appropriation - Highway Improvement Projects in Section 5 of SB 2012.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify.

Cal Klewin, Executive Director  
701.523.6171  
cal@trexpressway.com  
Theodore Roosevelt Expressway Association