

Tribal Police  
Officers House Bill  
No. 1126  
Senate Judiciary  
Committee Senator  
Diane Larson, Chair  
North Dakota State Capitol,  
Bismarck,ND  
March 3, 2021

Presented by Scott J. Davis, Executive Director, North Dakota Indian Affairs  
Commission

Good morning Madam Chair and members of the Committee. My name is Scott Davis, Executive Director of the North Dakota Indian Affairs Commission. I am here today in support of House Bill 1126.

Over the last 12 years, the Indian Affairs Commission has worked diligently to facilitate conversations, meetings and Memorandums of Agreements between Local, Tribal, State and Federal law enforcement agencies in the interest of promoting public safety. These efforts have been very successful.

In a rural state like North Dakota, there are times when local law enforcement officers must depend upon the assistance of a neighboring jurisdiction when the closest backup is not available. Uniformed officers, including tribal police officers, have served in this function on multiple occasions. However, the lack of clarity in the North Dakota Century Code has hindered this agency-to-agency assistance.

The changes outlined in House Bill 1126 do not expand arrest authority, or impact State or Tribal jurisdiction. Instead, this bill clarifies the authority of tribal police officers from the five Tribal nations existing within North Dakota's borders, to partner with local law enforcement officers, to assist and provide mutual aid in the event of an emergency.

The changes proposed in this bill will strengthen tribal and state relationships and collaborative law enforcement efforts.

This concludes my testimony and I am happy to answer any questions.