

SENATE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
March 4, 2020 - 10:00 a.m. – Fort Totten Room

North Dakota Department of Transportation
Brad Schaffer, Director for Driver License

HB 1168

Good morning, Chairman Clemens and members of the committee. I'm Brad Schaffer, Director for Driver License for the North Dakota Department of Transportation (NDDOT). I'm here to provide information related to HB 1168. Thank you for your time today.

House Bill 1168 adds a provision for the written examination or knowledge test for a class D license to be accessed online. Allowing online testing would be a benefit to the citizens, particularly in rural communities, as the student could access the exam anytime of the day and if they should fail they could take it again the next day without having to schedule an appointment and go to an office.

This technology is very new. Currently, we are aware of seven states who are in some stage of implementation of conducting online testing. It is important to note that even though the test is taken online, the student would not be able to immediately drive. They would still need to come into a Driver License office to obtain their learners permit card. They must verify identity, show their test certificate, prove residency, and have their photo taken.

In discussions with vendors and the above-mentioned states, we believe the initial cost of the software will be approximately ten dollars per test. This fee covers the costs of the software hosting, maintenance, security, fraud prevention and any customization from the procured vendor. Currently, DOT conducts 26,000 Class D knowledge tests per year; if we estimate 75% of those tests were conducted online this would result in 19,500 online tests per year. We do believe that once this practice becomes more widely used the cost could come down. The current fee to take a knowledge test is five dollars, which would cover a portion of the online testing cost.

The current bill in front of you was amended to include a ten dollar fee for online testing. With so many unknowns with this technology, NDDOT would prefer to leave the fee at five dollars and request appropriation authority to cover the rest of the cost of the testing fee.

This concludes my testimony. Thank You.