

Testimony HB 1253
House Transportation Committee
January 27, 2023

Mr Chairman and members of the House Transportation Committee, my name is Molly Barnes and I am Executive Vice President & Equipment Manager at Northern Improvement Company. Northern Improvement is a highway, heavy & municipal construction company with North Dakota offices in Fargo, Bismarck, and Dickinson. We have been in business since 1935 and are one of the founding members of the AGC of ND when it formed in 1951. We have also been members of the ND Motor Carriers for many years.

I appreciate the opportunity to testify today and in opposition to HB 1253.

Northern Improvement Company hauls aggregates, asphalt and concrete in our trucks. Our drivers are trained to tarp our aggregate loads on our state highway system. We never tarp wet concrete but we tarp our hot asphalt loads in cooler weather. On occasion, our tarps need repair. When that occurs, it is usually a 2 day repair, provided the tarp itself is not ripped, if it is, it could 4-5 days. That is 4-5 days of a trailer being out of work if the tarp has a tear, even if it is just a small tear.

Because we are a road construction company that hauls thousands of tons of material in a season, we get blamed by the traveling public for more than our fair share of rock chips. A couple of years ago, we put GPS tracking systems on our trucks. About 80 % of the calls we were receiving for windshield claims were for a truck in a location where we had no vehicles. We even receive phone calls for trucks that are empty. While I will admit that we aren't perfect, we do our