

Testimony in Favor of SB 2063

Sonja Kaye

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My name is **Sonja Kaye**. I'm a resident of South Fargo, and the proud owner of a 2014 all- electric Nissan LEAF. My LEAF is ancient by EV standards, only getting about 65-90 miles in range. However, that range is enough for me, because our household has another vehicle that we use for road trips. Eventually we would like to exchange our road-trip car for an all-electric one, but we are **waiting** for ND to be better prepared with charging stations along the highways.

I hope my testimony will impress on you the many benefits of EV ownership, the benefits that EVs provide to North Dakota, and the opportunity costs associated with throwing away NEVI funds.

The electric vehicle industry is in its infancy, yet the efficiency of EV battery technology is improving at a rapid pace. All major car manufacturers are ramping up their production of electric vehicles with 100% confidence in their ability to sell them. Why?

Benefits to Owners

EVs have many benefits over gas-powered vehicles. Here are just a few:

- 1) EVs cost **40% less in labor to manufacture**.
- 2) **EVs are less expensive to drive**, saving you about **\$149 for every 1,000 miles** you drive.
 - a) EVs have **lower maintenance costs** due to fewer moving parts and no need for oil changes.
- 3) EVs have **zero emissions**. People who care about **life** and the health of their children are choosing to buy them.

But having limited options for charging during road trips is a drawback, one for which consumers can do little themselves. Please support our consumer right to own a cheaper and cleaner car.

Benefit to North Dakota

Some on the Senate floor would have us believe that we should oppose this bill for philosophical reasons, but I ask you what *philosophy* asks us to stop progress? What *philosophy* forces us to continue buying a type of vehicle that is more expensive to own and operate? What good philosophy threatens the economic relevancy of our state?

ND is already poised to be a **key player in the supply chain** of electric vehicle batteries. The Talon Nickel processing plant is coming to coal country. This is an exciting new industry for ND and helps us diversify our economy. Voting "no" on this bill would be detrimental to this **emerging ND industry**.

Suggesting the EV industry is a threat to our energy production is ludicrous, as we will likely supply all the energy needed with **100% homegrown energy**, including coal power.

Federal funding of our interstate highway infrastructure is nothing new. **Republican** president Dwight D Eisenhower implemented the Federal-Aid Highway Act in 1956.

Furthermore, federal aid in jump-starting **new** industries is not new either. **Rural electric cooperatives** got federal help to establish coal plants. North Dakota was in a difficult situation, because Investor-

owned utilities were unwilling to provide power to our rural customers. Our state simply did not have the population density to make business profitable enough for them.

Likewise, the DOT included in their testimony that ND, unlike other states, will potentially struggle to find investors in **remote areas**. It will be important for ND to use federal funds to build out some of these remote areas.

Reinstate Option to use State Money

Furthermore, I would like you to **reconsider** giving the DOT an option to use **state money** to install chargers where a private investor is not interested. This is a **low-risk venture** for our state (unlike other projects being proposed in the state right now.)

A few state-owned charging stations would be a benefit to ND citizens, potentially giving us a new revenue stream for road maintenance.

Furthermore, having a state-owned facility in ND is not new. We have very successful examples in the Bank of ND and the State Mill.

Grid Concerns

I have heard people express concern about EVs' impact on the grid and believe these fears are unfounded. Local electric utilities will be involved in the process of interconnection. If an installation was a threat to the grid, the utility would prevent the interconnection.

In terms of **capacity** of the grid, there are many opportunities to build capacity right on location of the charging sites.

As far as **reliability**, our grid is in most peril during extreme weather events at which time EVs are less likely to be on the road anyway. Also, there is new technology where EVs can send electrons back to the grid acting like a storage generation resource.

Also, the **majority of EV charging is done at night** at home, which is an ideal situation for utilities as it can be done outside of peak demand hours.

Opportunity Cost

The transition to EVs is happening whether people want it to or not. We can graciously accept the \$25 million the federal government has on the table today. Or we can kick ourselves in five years down the road when most of you will also probably own an EV, and we are short on charging facilities. Let's not waste this opportunity. Please vote Do Pass on this bill and reconsider the benefits of using state money for state-owned charging stations.

Thank you.

Podcast discussion with a ND Tesla Owner

<https://omny.fm/shows/it-takes-2-with-amy-jj/whats-it-like-to-own-an-ev-in-north-dakota>