



Golden Valley County Sheriff's Office

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Chairman Sorvaag and members of the Senate Education and Environment Division,

My name is Dey Muckle, and I am the Sheriff of Golden Valley County. I am reaching out to you in support of HB 1011, which addresses the funding of the North Dakota Highway Patrol. Golden Valley County is located in the southwest part of the State, and is the fourth smallest County in the State by population. My Sheriffs Office has four POST certified officers, including myself. Golden Valley County contains 21.5 miles of Interstate 94, which is the main basis for this letter of support.

During times of severe inclement weather, it is not uncommon for the Golden Valley County Sheriffs Office to have multiple calls for service on Interstate 94. Those calls mainly consist of motorists assists calls for vehicles that have left the roadway, but also include different degrees of motor vehicle crashes, traffic hazard calls for vehicles stuck on the roadway, and stranded motorists. With an increase of drivers failing to use common sense while travelling, calls for service during severe inclement weather have begun to overwhelm my Department. Being a small, rural Sheriffs Office, there is usually only one person on duty at a time. During the multiple blizzards of 2022, I had to call on the Highway Patrol for assistance, as we were not able to keep up with the emergency calls on Interstate 94. This took an already limited number of Troopers for our region, and divided them even more. At times, I had most of my Department on Interstate 94 responding to calls, plus I had to go as far as using the Beach Fire Department to respond to motorist assists, and assist with traffic coordination as we closed Interstate 94.

I am in full support of the Highway Patrol's request for 15 additional Troopers, as in my opinion, the field operations side of Highway Patrol is significantly under staffed. The Highway Patrol has always done their best to provide assistance when requested, however, during widespread weather events, the calls for service outnumber them too, forcing the Troopers to put calls in pending, until they can be responded to. I believe that the Highway Patrol could easily justify more Troopers than the 15 that they are requesting, but I appreciate them being conservative, and seeing where 15 gets them.

Thank you,

Dey Muckle
Sheriff, Golden Valley County
North Dakota