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Senate Transportation Committee
68th Legislative Assembly
March 2, 2023

Subject: Testimony in Support of HB 1336

Chairman Clemens and members of the Senate Transportation Committee:

My name is Allen Scheurer, and I am a volunteer member of Valley Water Rescue testifying in support of HB 1336 and its addition of special letter plates for Search and Rescue personal. This bill is amendment to the initiated measure No. 4 passed on November 6, 2018, and recognizes the Search and Rescue (SAR) personal as Emergency Responders.

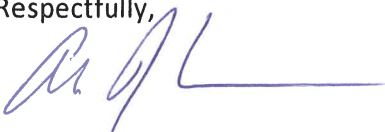
Valley Water Rescue is a public safety non-profit organization that operates SAR activities to support Law Enforcement and Fire Departments throughout North Dakota and local municipalities. Our Public Safety mission includes Dive Rescue, Remote Operated Vehicle (ROV) Sonar, K9 SAR, and Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV).

Volunteer Emergency Responder teams like ours are on call 24/7 and require the use of personal vehicles. Scene safety is a top priority, and the Emergency Responder plate allows SAR teams to be easily identifiable to LEO and Fire Rescue teams. I acknowledge the passage of SB 2329 in the 67th Legislative Assembly allowing volunteer SAR to classify personal transportation as a Class C Emergency Vehicles with the use of lights. Our team does not adopt this practice and feel the Emergency Responder Plates would be adequate to address our response and Law Enforcement scene safety needs.

Additionally Volunteer SAR teams provide a necessary public service, and the men and women who perform these duties are typically not compensated and do it because of their sense of community and generous personalities. The Emergency Response plate is a way the public can show appreciation to these individuals. Emergency Response team members are extremely dedicated and spend many hours of training outside their normal jobs for times when they are needed. These Emergency Responder plates are a way for our teams to recruit and retain members, something that is vital to be able to support our communities.

Thank you for the opportunity to address the committee and I conclude this written testimony in support of HB 1336 and encourage a do pass recommendation.

Respectfully,



Allen Scheurer