

Neutral Testimony for House Bill 1506

Mr. Chair and members of the Senate Transportation Committee thank you for allowing me to share neutral testimony for House Bill 1506.

My name is Justin Kristan, I am the Founder and Executive Director of Bike Walk North Dakota (formerly the North Dakota Active Transportation Alliance), North Dakota's statewide advocacy organization for bicycling and walking. First and foremost, North Dakota roadways should be as safe as possible for all roadway users.

The board of directors for Bike Walk North Dakota did not come to consensus on supporting or opposing this bill. It is the belief of Bike Walk North Dakota that doing anything while in an intoxicated state is not a good idea. The outcomes from using a hammer, a vacuum, or even walking while intoxicated (depending on the extent of intoxication) can end badly for the intoxicated person and those around them. With that said, being intoxicated while operating a bicycle or a horse instead of an automobile may, and I emphasize may, provide a less damaging outcome. Doing anything while intoxicated is simply not a good idea.

The intention of this bill appears to seek to reduce injury and death by allowing a person to opt to use a bicycle, horse or other rideable animal if they plan to drink alcoholic beverages for an evening etc. Can a drunken bicyclist or equestrian cause a damaging or fatal crash? Certainly. What are the odds of this happening versus operating a motor vehicle while intoxicated? I'm unaware of any statistics that speak to these odds. Common sense speaks volumes. Best not to drink and drive anything.

Bike Walk North Dakota trusts that the Senate Transportation Committee will scrutinize this bill and make the right decision for North Dakotans and its visitors.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to provide neutral testimony for House Bill 1506.

Respectfully,

Justin Kristan

Executive Director,

Bike Walk North Dakota