

TESTIMONY OF

**Maj. Aaron Hummel, Chief of Staff**

Good morning, Chairman Clemens and members of the committee. My name is Aaron Hummel and I serve as the chief of staff for the North Dakota Highway Patrol. I am here to provide testimony in support of Senate Bill 2053.

As you can see, the bill is 46 pages, but I will break it down to two areas. First, the purpose of this bill is to revise the term from highway patrolman to highway patrol trooper. Secondly, the bill would change the term accident to crash.

The term patrolman is not a reflection of our agency, considering we are made up of both men and women. This language change is just one step in the process that the highway patrol is doing to ensure females are welcomed into the agency. The term trooper is inclusive of both males and females. Quite frankly, this change should have been discussed in 1979 when the first female officer was hired to join the ranks of the highway patrol.

The change of the term accident to crash is a continuation of a transition that occurred last session when there were other changes made to the law specifically regarding crash reporting. As provided in that bill last session, the term accident implies that the event occurred unexpectedly or by chance while the term crash means there are predictable contributing factors. The change in this bill will revise all other sections of century code that reference motor vehicle accidents and replace them with crashes. The change in terminology is supported by the Vision Zero initiative.

We worked with legislative council to ensure we had an all-inclusive list in which these two terms are used, and what you have before you today is a bill that only changes the two terms throughout century code.

This concludes my testimony, I'd appreciate your support of this bill, and I would be glad to answer any questions you may have.