

Good morning, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. My name is Chad Orn, Director of Project Development for the North Dakota Department of Transportation (NDDOT). I'm here to introduce and support Senate Bill 2063.

Senate Bill 2063 would allow the NDDOT to enter into cooperative agreements with public or private entities to administer funds received from the federal government for electric vehicle (EV) charging programs such as the current National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) program. The goal of this program is for states to strategically deploy EV charging infrastructure and establish an interconnected charging network throughout the states. The NDDOT will receive \$25.9M over five years to develop DC fast charging infrastructure. The initial phase will build out the two existing alternative fuel corridors (AFC's) I-29 and I-94 to full NEVI compliance by 2026.

NDDOT's intent is to create a grant program to award funding to construct, operate, administer, and maintain electric vehicles charging infrastructure in accordance with the states NEVI plan. The program requires a match component to the federal funding of 20%. This bill would allow the director to determine a reasonable cost-share for the project in accordance with the federal aid provisions. Ultimately, NDDOT would delegate ownership of the station to those public or private entities.

Although the department does not intend to own the charging stations there may be locations where it is not feasible for private entities to own and operate them. In this case, we would ask to be allowed to charge a fee to users to cover the cost of electricity. The fees collected would be deposited into a separate electric vehicle charging fund within the state treasury as a continuing appropriation used to fund the infrastructure.

The guidance from the Joint Office of Energy and Transportation is evolving. Adding this section would give NDDOT the flexibility to work collaboratively with public or private entities to meet the goals of EV charging programs.

This concludes my testimony. Thank you.