February 3, 2023
Senate Transportation Committee
SB 2348
Sen. Clemens, Chair

For the record, I am Stephanie Dassinger Engebretson. I am appearing on behalf of the Chiefs of Police Association of North Dakota. I am also the deputy director and attorney for the North Dakota League of Cities.

The Chiefs of Police appear today in support of SB 2348 because it would provide another tool to law enforcement to try to address the large amounts of fleeing events that are occurring in our communities. Some amendments have been drafted by a city prosecutor after concerns were raised about the way the bill was previously written. The Chiefs support the amendments.

To put this issue into perspective, the following is a table showing the pursuit/fleeing incidents in a motor vehicle from 8 of the largest cities in North Dakota:

Number of Pursuits/Fleeing in a Motor Vehicle			
City	**2020**	**2021**	**2022**
Bismarck	254	335	*
Fargo	175	183	230
Grand Forks	29	34	20
Jamestown	2	6	7
Mandan	49	53	55
Minot	78	105	76
West Fargo	54	45	51
Williston	22	17	27

*Data still being processed

As you can see from the data in Bismarck, Fargo, and Minot, fleeing incidents are happening more than once a week there. In Mandan and West Fargo, these incidents are occurring approximately once a week. Fleeing incidents put community members at a huge risk of personal injury or death due to the danger of the fleeing vehicle driving through the city at an increased speed and ignoring traffic rules.

Under the bill, within 96 hours of witnessing a motor vehicle fleeing incident if the driver of the vehicle has not been identified, law enforcement officers can issue a traffic citation to the registered owner of the vehicle. The amount of the citation would be $500.

A citation cannot be issued if the vehicle was reported stolen within a reasonable time of the event occurring. Additionally, the registered owner may not be found to have violated this section if:

- He or she provides the name and address of the individual operating the vehicle at the time of the fleeing;
- In a lessor/lessee motor vehicle ownership arrangement when the lessee provides the identifying information for the lessor; and
- The motor vehicle is a rental vehicle and the rental company provides identifying information for the individual renting the vehicle at the time.

SB 2348 would provide an vital tool for law enforcement and the Chiefs of Police request that you adopted the amendments and provide a Do Pass recommendation on HB 2348.