



# *Kidder County Public School District#1*

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Good morning Chairman Heinert and members of the House Education Committee. My name is Rick Diegel, and I am the superintendent the Kidder County School District and I am speaking in support of HB 1214.

As you may have heard me state earlier, the Kidder County School District has the second largest land area of all school districts in North Dakota, and actually has more square miles than the state of Rhode Island. Our school district operates 9 rural and 1 town bus route, which was reduced from 10 rural routes last year because we could not find a bus driver. Some of our routes begin picking students up at 6:40 AM, and they arrive at school at 8:00 AM. Some of our students ride a bus for nearly 2 hours and 45 minutes a day.

On the budget side of things, our transportation budget normally takes up approximately 10% of our budget, or about \$600,000. Over the past 3 years, our state transportation reimbursement has averaged to cover approximately 58% of our expenditure's.

As bus costs continue to increase and the need to make our salaries and benefits more attractive, it is imperative that we create a transportation funding formula that allows us a mechanism to receive additional funding. I believe that the changes that have been presented to you in earlier testimony does exactly that, and I support these changes.

I will stand for any questions.