

Greetings, Chair and members of the Committee. I'm Matt Linneman, Deputy Director for Engineering for the North Dakota Department of Transportation (NDDOT). I'm here in opposition to HB 1029.

Section 2 of the proposed bill provides for the creation of a new facility construction committee that will study and review all construction projects impacting state facilities. This will require additional administrative work and time to report, coordinate, and consider input from the committee at multiple stages of each project. This added process will delay the work needed at NDDOT facilities for maintenance, updates, remodeling, or the construction of new buildings. This bill may also hinder our ability to promptly address critical and urgent repairs that affect safety or essential operations.

The NDDOT currently has a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and Five Biennium Facilities Plan. The CIP includes all needed repairs and updates of NDDOT facilities. The Five Biennium Facilities Plan was developed to plan out future facility improvements and shows the funding gap for new construction, additions, remodels, and repairs.

Transparency is essential to maintaining public trust, which is why we voluntarily provide the Legislative Branch with our facility plans. These plans detail new buildings, remodels, and other significant capital improvements, ensuring everyone stays informed about the building projects planned for the upcoming biennium. Adding a facility construction committee does not enhance transparency but duplicates efforts, creating inefficiencies without tangible benefits.

To understand the potential administrative burden this would create, it's important to consider the scope of NDDOT's facilities. The department manages 389 buildings of varying sizes and purposes, from the Central Office on the Capitol Grounds to simple salt storage sheds. The proposed bill applies the same extensive review process to all projects, regardless of the size or complexity of the build or remodel. This uniform requirement would significantly increase administrative work, even for minor upgrades, diverting resources from other critical tasks. NDDOT buildings include the following types:

NDDOT Buildings

- 1 – Central Office Building
(Improvements are reviewed by the Capitol Grounds Planning Commission.)
- 1 – Materials and Research Building
- 8 – District office buildings with shops
- 8 – District headquarters truck barns (pre-engineered steel buildings)
- 72 – Section buildings (pre-engineered steel buildings)
- 106 – Equipment storage buildings (mostly pre-engineered steel buildings)
- 15 – Large salt storage buildings (hoop style buildings)
- 83 – Salt storage sheds (post frame buildings)
- 14 – Salt brine generating sheds (wood frame buildings)
- 17 – Rest areas
- 9 – Weight stations
- 4 – Central supply and radio shops for NDDOT and NDIT use
- 44 – Radio tower buildings (pre-engineered building)
- 7 – Other offices for Driver's License, Motor Vehicle and Construction

While the NDDOT supports transparency and has a history of strong collaboration with the Legislature, HB 1029 introduces inefficiencies that will hinder our ability to maintain and improve facilities effectively. We are committed to open communication and believe existing processes already fulfill the intended goals of the proposed committee.

This concludes my testimony. Thank you.