

Testimony Prepared for:
House Transportation Committee
January 23, 2025
By: Genny Dienstmann, NDACo



**RE: Opposition of HB 1407
Increase in Weight Limits for Vehicles**

Chairman Ruby and House Transportation Committee Members, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in opposition on HB 1407. I am Genny Dienstmann with the ND Association of Counties, and in my role, I also serve as executive director of the ND Association of County Engineers and Highway Superintendents (NDACE).

While counties may understand the desire to increase weight limits on our local transportation system, many of our current road and bridge structures are not capable of carrying these additional weight limits. The majority of county roads were designed for 80,000 pound loads or less – this proposal to increase to 113,000 pounds is nearly a 30% increase in weigh limits.

Counties are struggling to maintain our current infrastructure; funds to upgrade these roads and bridges to handle the proposed weight increase are not there. North Dakota's rural bridges have the ninth highest rate of structural deficiencies in the nation. By increasing the weight limits to 113,000, the structural damage to these bridges will only increase, with the likelihood of more bridge closures or even worse, bridge collapses.

If counties choose not to increase their load limits to this new rate, there will be additional costs to sign these roads with the current lower weight limits; which will put added strain on already tight budgets.

Chairman Ruby and Committee Members, we respectfully urge the committee to recommend a Do Not Pass on HB 1407 to help counties maintain our current infrastructure and provide a safer transportation system for our citizens.