

Greetings, Chair and members of the Committee. I'm Ron Henke, Director of the North Dakota Department of Transportation (NDDOT).

I'm here to oppose SB 2391.

This bill designates Stutsman County Road 62 as part of the state highway system. This bill would add 18 miles to the state highway system between ND Highway 46 and Interstate 94. The current roadway consists of 10 miles of gravel surfacing and eight miles of asphalt surfacing.

North Dakota Century Code (NDCC) Section 24-01-02 authorizes the director of the NDDOT to add roads and highways to the state highway system, with two key limitations: no more than 50 miles may be added per year, and the total system cannot exceed the lesser of 7,700 miles or 7% of the of the state's total publicly owned road miles (approximately 7,446 miles). Currently the state highway system is at 7,415 miles and HB 1053, which has already passed the House of Representatives, proposes to eliminate the 7% cap.

Given this existing authority, local public agencies can request roadway additions through NDDOT's established process. These requests are evaluated based on a number of factors, including connectivity to the existing system, traffic volumes, redundancy with existing routes, and overall benefit to the state.

The NDDOT prefers to continue using current process in evaluating roadways for addition to the state highway system.

This concludes my testimony. I would be happy to answer any questions. Thank you.