

MICROFILM DIVIDER

OMB/RECORDS MANAGEMENT DIVISION
SFN 2053 (2/85) 5M



ROLL NUMBER

DESCRIPTION

2314

2007 SENATE TRANSPORTATION

SB 2314

2007 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Bill/Resolution No. SB 2314

Senate Transportation Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Hearing Date: January 26, 2007

Recorder Job Number: 2059

Committee Clerk Signature

Jody Hauge

Minutes:

Senator Lee opened the hearing on SB 2314 relating to motor vehicle registration fees and funding of public transportation; and to provide notice of fee increases.

There were five committee members present and one absent.

Senator Nething, from district 12 introduced SB 2314 and gave testimony in support of the bill. He said that the bill increased the registration fee from three dollars to six dollars for each motor vehicle registered. The fee must be deposited with the state treasurer, who shall credit the fee to the public transportation fund. In lines 21-24 he talked about the distribution and the distribution formula is increased in the same ratio as the three dollar increase. On page 2, section 3 the intent is to have on the registration card a notice that three dollars goes to public transportation services. He believes that the motor vehicle owners are entitled to know why this registration fee is being increased.

Senator Fiebiger, senator from district 45 and co-sponsor, testified in support of SB 2314.

(Written testimony)

Mike Williams, Fargo City Commissioner testified in support of SB 2314. He presented the testimony of Jim Gilmour, Director of Planning and Development from Fargo. (Written testimony)

Senator Lee said that when he has been in Fargo he sees that there is quite a bit of space on the bus and it isn't being consumed. He asked Mr. Williams what they are doing to improve that so the seats are full.

Mr. Williams answered that they have to work with peak times. When growing the transit you have to service and plan for the peak time. Sometimes you will see a bus stop and pick up one person the next time that stop might fill the bus. You have to plan for the peak if you are going to service your riders. Part of the appropriation is so they can add a frequency to routes and also add routes so people can depend more on transit and not just incidental for a day when their car is working. A goal he thinks they can attain with appropriations is to double frequency and routes in the next five years.

Senator Lee asked if everyone paid the same.

Mr. Williams said that they had a reduced rate for handicap and they can also buy a reduced monthly bus pass.

Robin Werre, director of Bis-ManTransit Board of Bismarck testified in support of SB 2314.

(Written Testimony)

Senator Potter asked why she talked about a 3 year period. Is that Federal money.

Robin Werre replied yes, and that they have money from 2004, 2005 and 2006.

Senator Lee asked how their ridership was in the past few years.

Robin Werre replied that the CAT system is new, it was started in 2004. The ridership is increasing every year. We are up about 17,000 in 2006 from 2005. She said their consultants tell them that it will take at least 5 years in operation to really get the riders out there. She wishes more people would ride it to the capitol because it goes right through the capitol grounds.

Carol Anderson, director of West River Transit spoke in favor of SB 2314. Written testimony enclosed.

Senator Lee asked what the cost was if he was to ride their bus.

Carol Anderson answered that it varied anywhere from \$5. to \$7. Per trip. Most of their ridership is the elderly and disabled. To get to the grocery store or around town it is usually a dollar.

James Moench, Executive Director of the NDDAC spoke in favor of SB 2314. Written testimony enclosed.

Wayne Triska, a teacher and Orientation and Mobility Specialist for students with vision impairments spoke in favor of SB 2314. Written testimony enclosed.

Darcy Andahl, Bismarck spoke in favor of SB 2314. Written testimony enclosed.

Leon Dietrich, Bismarck testified in favor of SB 2314. Written testimony enclosed.

Tom Alexander, Project Director for the ND Medicaid Infrastructure Grant/Comprehensive Employment System Initiative with the ND Center for Person with Disabilities at Minot State University, presented testimony in support of SB 2314. Written testimony enclosed.

Senator Potter asked if there was any consideration to just seeking the funding whether than having this mechanism. Did you ever think about just going after the surplus?

Mr. Alexander answered no; he really didn't have anything to do with the bill.

Senator Nething said that they started out with this being just a fee...taking out of general fund has not been acceptable in the past but raising fees have.

Christina McComish testified in favor of SB 2314. Written testimony enclosed.

Paul Grindeland, Director of Transportation at Fargo Senior Services spoke in support of SB 2314. Written testimony enclosed.

Esther Leser sent a letter in support of SB 2314.

No opposing testimony.

No neutral testimony.

Senator Lee closed the hearing at 10:45AM.

2007 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Bill/Resolution No. SB 2314

Senate Transportation Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Hearing Date: February 1, 2007

Recorder Job Number: 2314

Committee Clerk Signature

Jody Range

Minutes:

Senator Lee opened discussion on SB 2314 relating to motor vehicle registration fees and funding of public transportation; and to provide notice of fee increases.

Senator Lee said the registration fee was created in 1989 at one dollar. In 1999 the registration fee went to two dollars. In 2005 it went to three dollars.

Senator Nething said the reason the bill is at three dollars is because that is what they are losing in Federal grants. Senator Nething said those figures are what he used to put the bill together.

Senator Lee gave the impacts of what a three dollar increase would be 3.3 million; a one dollar increase would be 1.6 million.

Senator Nething said not only are they losing Federal grants but they are also increasing usage.

Senator Fiebiger said that this money would also help them access other federal funds that they wouldn't be able to access without the money.

Senator Lee moved an amendment that would change the increase from six dollars to four dollars. He felt doubling the registration was too much and in the past when this way of funding had been accessed they had raised the fee a dollar at a time. Proposed amendment attached.

The motion died from lack of a second.

Senator Nething moved for a Do Pass on SB 2314 and refer to Appropriations.

Senator Fiebiger seconded.

Senator Lee asked the clerk to call the roll. 4-1-1

Senator Nething will carry SB 2314.

FISCAL NOTE
 Requested by Legislative Council
 01/17/2007

Bill/Resolution No.: SB 2314

1A. State fiscal effect: *Identify the state fiscal effect and the fiscal effect on agency appropriations compared to funding levels and appropriations anticipated under current law.*

	2005-2007 Biennium		2007-2009 Biennium		2009-2011 Biennium	
	General Fund	Other Funds	General Fund	Other Funds	General Fund	Other Funds
Revenues				\$4,700,000		\$4,700,000
Expenditures				\$4,700,000		\$4,700,000
Appropriations				\$4,700,000		\$4,700,000

1B. County, city, and school district fiscal effect: *Identify the fiscal effect on the appropriate political subdivision.*

2005-2007 Biennium			2007-2009 Biennium			2009-2011 Biennium		
Counties	Cities	School Districts	Counties	Cities	School Districts	Counties	Cities	School Districts
			\$4,700,000			\$4,700,000		

2A. Bill and fiscal impact summary: *Provide a brief summary of the measure, including description of the provisions having fiscal impact (limited to 300 characters).*

This bill increases the public transportation fee from \$3 to \$6 for each motor vehicle registered. The bill provides for the distribution of these funds by the NDDOT to the counties for transportation purposes.

B. Fiscal impact sections: *Identify and provide a brief description of the sections of the measure which have fiscal impact. Include any assumptions and comments relevant to the analysis.*

This bill amends NDCC 39-04.2-03 and 39-04.2-04 to provide for an increase to the public transportation fee of \$3 per motor vehicle registered. The bill also provides for the distribution of these funds by the NDDOT to the counties for transportation purposes.

3. State fiscal effect detail: *For information shown under state fiscal effect in 1A, please:*

A. Revenues: *Explain the revenue amounts. Provide detail, when appropriate, for each revenue type and fund affected and any amounts included in the executive budget.*

Increasing the public transportation fee to \$6 from \$3 will generate approximately \$4.7 million in additional revenue per biennium. This revenue will initially go to the NDDOT. Subsequently, the DOT will distribute the revenue to the counties as specified in NDCC 39-04.2-04.

B. Expenditures: *Explain the expenditure amounts. Provide detail, when appropriate, for each agency, line item, and fund affected and the number of FTE positions affected.*

The DOT's expenditures would increase \$4.7 million per biennium as the DOT distributed the additional revenue to the counties in accordance with Section 2 of the bill.

C. Appropriations: *Explain the appropriation amounts. Provide detail, when appropriate, for each agency and fund affected. Explain the relationship between the amounts shown for expenditures and appropriations. Indicate whether the appropriation is also included in the executive budget or relates to a continuing appropriation.*

To accommodate the additional distribution to the counties as specified in Section 2 of the bill, the NDDOT would require an additional \$4.7 million appropriation.

Name:	Shannon L. Sauer	Agency:	NDDOT
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Phone Number: 328-4375

Date Prepared: 01/19/2007

Date: 2-1-06

Roll Call Vote #: ~~2-1-0~~

4-1-0

2007 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ROLL CALL VOTES
BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2314

Senate Transportation Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number _____

Action Taken do pass refer to appropriation

Motion Made By Senator Nething Seconded By Senator Fiebiger

Senators	Yes	No	Senators	Yes	No
Chairman Gary Lee		✓	Senator JoNell Bakke	✓	
V Ch John Andrist			Senator Tom Fiebiger	✓	
Senator Dave Nething	✓		Senator Tracy Potter	✓	

Total (Yes) 4 No 1

Absent 0

Floor Assignment Senator Nething

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

SB 2314: Transportation Committee (Sen. G. Lee, Chairman) recommends DO PASS and BE REREFERRED to the Appropriations Committee (4 YEAS, 1 NAY, 1 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). SB 2314 was rereferred to the Appropriations Committee.

2007 SENATE APPROPRIATIONS

SB 2314

2007 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Bill/Resolution No. 2314

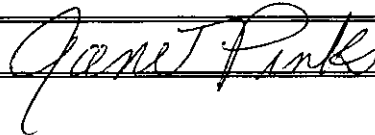
Senate Appropriations Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Hearing Date: 02-13-07

Recorder Job Number: 3452

Committee Clerk Signature



Minutes:

Chairman Holmberg opened the hearing on SB 2314.

Senator Dave Nething, District 12, Jamestown, introduced SB 2314 regarding motor vehicle registration fee increase from \$3.00 to \$6.00. It also requires the registration is increased and applies to public transportation services.

Senator Christmann asked if there was someone to respond as to how this is handled. The response was it is a distribution issue.

Senator Christmann indicated that when you trade in vehicles, the plates go with the vehicle, now if you buy and new vehicle and pay the \$6.00 then trade it in is there a refund.

Ken Toupa, representing the ND Senior Service Providers, Dakota Senior Service Providers, testified indicating the bill proposes an increase of the fee. That money is used predominately in public transportation and predominately that is available for rural providers. Urban providers can access dollars directly from the federal government. The funds are used on a 50-50 or an 80-20 match. Mr. Toupa distributed statistics for all public transportation (1) and contact information of senior service providers (2).

Jim Gilmour, Director, Planning and Development, Fargo, presented written testimony (3) in support of SB 2314 indicating the public transportation is an essential public service to urban

and rural areas and how it enables people to live independently in their homes longer. He discussed what had been received in the past from state and federal funds.

Paul Grindeland, Director, Transportation, Fargo Senior Services, presented written testimony (4) and testified in support of SB 2314. He indicated there is a continuing need to expand services, a need for local match of federal funds, transit coordination projects and drivers wages and recruitment.

Robin Werre, Director, Bis-Man Transit Board, Bismarck, presented written testimony (5) and testified in support of SB 2314 indicating they operate a public transit for elderly 60 years of age or older servicing 8900 riders. She then discussed their budget including state and federal funds.

Darrell Francis, Director, Souris Basin Transportation, Minot, presented written testimony (6) and testified in support of SB 2314 indicating their system operates in an eight county area servicing approximately 36,000 passengers. He discussed their budget including state and federal funds.

Leon Dietrich, Custodian, Bismarck Public Schools, presented written testimony (7) and testified in support of SB 2314 indicating he uses the transit system and CAT bus on a daily basis and he strongly supports the services public transportation provides.

James M. Moench, Executive Director, ND Disabilities Advocacy Consortium, presented written testimony and testified in support of SB 2314 indicating his organization is concerned with addressing any issues that affect people with disabilities.

Chairman Holmberg closed the hearing on SB 2314.

2007 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Bill/Resolution No. 2314

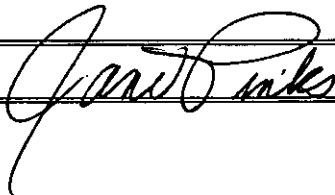
Senate Appropriations Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Hearing Date: 02-13-07

Recorder Job Number: 3454

Committee Clerk Signature



Minutes:

Chairman Holmberg opened the hearing on SB 2314 relating to motor vehicle registration fees, funding public transportation and it raised the fee three dollars.

Senator Grindberg moved a Do Pass on SB 2314, **Senator Lindaas** seconded.

Discussion followed. A roll call vote was taken resulting in 7 yes, 4 no, 3 absent. The motion passed and Senator Olafson will carry the bill.

Chairman Holmberg closed the hearing on SB 2314.

Date: 2/13
Roll Call Vote #: 1

2007 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ROLL CALL VOTES
BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2314

Senate Appropriations Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number _____

Action Taken DP

Motion Made By Grindberg Seconded By Lindaas

Senators	Yes	No	Senators	Yes	No
Senator Ray Holmberg, Chrm		✓	Senator Aaron Krauter		✓
Senator Bill Bowman, V Chrm		✓	Senator Elroy N. Lindaas	✓	
Senator Tony Grindberg, V Chrm	✓		Senator Tim Mathern	✓	
Senator Randel Christmann		✓	Senator Larry J. Robinson	✓	
Senator Tom Fischer	✓		Senator Tom Seymour		✓
Senator Ralph L. Kilzer		✓	Senator Harvey Tallackson	✓	
Senator Karen K. Krebsbach	✓				
Senator Rich Wardner	✓				

Total (Yes) 8 No 6

Absent _____

Floor Assignment Nothing Trans

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE (410)
February 13, 2007 2:51 p.m.

Module No: SR-30-3123
Carrier: Nothing
Insert LC: . Title: .

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

SB 2314: Appropriations Committee (Sen. Holmberg, Chairman) recommends DO PASS
(8 YEAS, 6 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). SB 2314 was placed on the
Eleventh order on the calendar.

2007 HOUSE TRANSPORTATION

SB 2134

2007 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Bill/Resolution No. SB 2314

House Transportation Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Hearing Date: 03-01-2007

Recorder Job Number: 4212

Committee Clerk Signature

Lisa M Thomas

Minutes:

Vice Chairman Ruby opened the hearing on SB 2314. SB 2314 relates to motor vehicle registration fees and funding of public transportation; and to provide notice of fee increases. Rep. Price and Vigesaa were absent for part of this hearing.

Senator Nething introduced the bill.

Sen. Nething: This bill relates to public transportation funding. It increases the motor vehicle registration fees to six dollars from three dollars. The other part of the bill on page two, line eleven through fifteen where we ask that the fee increase be stated on the registration card itself that the three dollar increase goes for public transportation in the state. The reason I wanted to have that on the bill was to be straight forward with our people who register their motor vehicles and let them know that this money is being used for public transit. The three dollars today is about a half of a bushel of corn. It isn't so much the amount I don't think as it is the concept. We've used the concept before to do it on motor vehicle registration and that's why the bill is produced as such. This is our support for those folks who live in areas who are unable to provide their own transportation, primarily rural folks and those with disabilities and primarily for those who are in their extended youth like I am.

Rep. Thorpe: Is there any other fee increases on the registration this session that you know of?

Sen. Nething: None have come through our transportation committee.

Rep. Thorpe: What are all of the different funding sources?

Sen. Nething: There will be people here who will give you the break down of it.

Ken Tupa, ND Senior Service Providers spoke in support of the bill. See written testimony.

Rep. Weisz: You mentioned that fares can't be used for match. It says you pay a fifty-fifty on operating costs, so what are we doing with the fare money?

Tupa: I believe that the fare dollars collected are applied to the operating expenses.

Rep. Weisz: Are you aware of any other state dollars that goes into transit?

Tupa: I am not aware of any other dollars.

Rep. Thorpe: Under the column Federal 5307, everything is zero until you get down to Bismarck, Fargo and Grand Forks. I am presuming that is federal dollars to cities over fifty thousand, is that right?

Tupa: I do believe that is correct.

Rep. Ruby: Do you know what the average fare is?

Tupa: I don't know the average; we could probably figure that out with the numbers provided here.

Rep. Ruby: Under the other sheet that you handed out for contacts, is the list that is provided in each of these regions, are those the agencies and the uses for the money or is it just for transportation?

Tupa: The dollars that we are requesting in SB 2314 are for transportation use.

Rep. Ruby: On this it show meals on wheels and legal services and senior companion and the funds don't go for that?

Tupa: No, the funds don't go to that. This is just a list of our members and they do provide a number of services.

Rep. Schmidt: I noticed the federal funds available are 3.2 million dollar increase for rural, but did you get an increase for urban?

Tupa: I can't answer that for certain, however, a couple of the providers will certainly do that.

Rep. Price: Just for purposes to make sure we understand that can we walk through a county for example on the first page it is showing that they are getting eighteen thousand eight hundred and eighty dollars and then twenty six ninety-nine in the rural. But if you go the next page, they are showing that cost per mile is \$6.13 and \$8.94 per ride and they are only doing four thousand nine miles in a year.

Tupa: Which provider?

Rep. Price: Eddie County.

Tupa: That appears to be the case.

Rep. Price: And they got twenty-four thousand dollars to do those four thousand miles?

Tupa: That appears to be the case, yes.

Rep. Thorpe: I realize that we aren't talking about huge amounts of money here, but I've had constituents back in my district who have voiced concerns about another increase on registration fees. Now this bill would add an additional three for this to make it six. Have you explored other means of funding?

Tupa: When we looked at our needs and determined how we might come to the legislature with a request for some assistance for those needs, we did discuss general funds and we did look at a couple of other mechanisms that might provide that funding, however we came back to this format because it is already established and there is already three dollars from the motor vehicle registration fees. The DOT budget for example that started in the House and is

now in the Senate, there was some general fund dollars in there in the budget and out of that, our sense was that general fund dollars wouldn't have been maybe as acceptable. This formula is funded. There is a system in place.

Rep. Thorpe: When we were discussing matching funds for federal highway dollars, it was brought out that they suspect down the road that they might get less federal dollars, has your group been advised?

Tupa: I have heard that as well that there could be. Right now we are operating on a continuing appropriation. I have heard discussion that it is possible that there could be less dollars available.

(Rep. Vigesaa is present now)

Rep. Weisz: It is true that probably the federal highway dollars will be decreased but it also fears transit dollars will be increased and that seems to be the answer to the DOT that they are taking, so while we may see a decrease in total dollars because of the fear that will happen on transit. My question would be considering we do have eight million currently for the biennium and for a year we are showing basically the rural plans a total of nine hundred and forty-nine thousand dollars, where is the other 3.1 million?

Tupa: I suspect that it is probably a case of having the dollars to match and access for the federal funds that are available. I think our providers can answer that.

Mike Williams, Fargo City Commission spoke in support of the bill. See written testimony.

Rep. Weisz: One of the things I hear and you made the mention that your rider ship has doubled, but one of the things that comes back to me is the fact that we are going to spend more money and the buses are half empty, so from your prospective, how do you address that?

Williams: It's like driving by Wal-Mart at ten in the morning. It might have ten to one hundred cars there and if you go at five or six o'clock in the afternoon, you might have a half full lot. You have to have the capacity for those riders and you can't be switching buses up and down for the size of the load. At one stop light we have some park and rides. The commuters stop off and one bus that is going one way may have thirty five riders and to drop them off and pick up five and it looks like an empty bus, but generally our buses are thirty-five footers and take thirty to thirty five people and they are designed for that.

Rep. Kelsch: You mentioned Handi-Wheels and I was kind of looking at the Handi-Wheels. It seems as though that's a you know large fare for rides based on the numbers that we have here. What is Handi-Wheels?

Williams: We have quite a few of them. These are people who are generally in full-term care where para-transit, they are not equipped for taking someone in their bed and bringing them to the hospital. They are equipped for a wheel chair, but not full-term care. Handi-Wheels is dedicated more to people with bigger needs.

Rep. Dosch: What are the fares?

Williams: It depends on. Generally they are two dollars. College students have a buy-in deal with NDSU and there is also a monthly pass card for thirty dollars with unlimited ride. We have a lot of new Americans and they work shifts and can't afford cars. We have a ten dollar pass and they wouldn't have been able to get that job without that bus pass. Once they get that job, they are riding the bus on a regular basis.

Brian Aretts, Executive Director of the Fargo Senior Commission spoke in support of the bill.
See written testimony.

Rep. Weisz: I thought that 5307 dollars over the direct federal for urban areas and they aren't part of that eight million dollars that is in the DOT.

Brian: The 5307 is director of an area but that is part of the eight million dollars that is referred to that is being spent in federal funding in the state.

Rep. Weisz: My understanding was that federal dollars that went straight to the urban because the ones passed through the DOT do NOT reflect or show up on the DOT's budget and the DOT's budget does reflect about eight million dollars for public transit, so that was my question. That is why I didn't put the 2.8 million in there because I assumed that was direct because the urban applies for that direct from the federal government.

Brian: I think you raise a good point and maybe we need to do some research to make sure of that.

Rep. Price: If you are taking people into Minnesota for services, are you picking up in Moorehead too? If so, is there any contribution from Minnesota?

Brian: Currently we don't pick up any riders in Minnesota. We are negotiating with the city of Moorehead and Dillworth from the Minnesota side to have a metro wide senior ride service. If we do that, all of the expenses associated with the MN side will be covered by them.

Rep. Price: But you do take them there for services?

Brian: Occasionally there will be a person who will need to go for dialysis from Wahpeton to Fergus Falls.

Carol Anderson, Director of West River Transit spoke in support of the bill. See written testimony.

Robin Were, Director of Bis-Man Transit Board, spoke in support of the bill. See written testimony.

(Rep. Kelsch was absent from hearing at this time.)

(Rep. Ruby and Rep. Gruchalla left as well.)

Rep. Weisz: You received nine hundred and fifty-seven thousand last year of federal funding. Was that all of the federal that was available or had you left some on the table?

Werre: I left thirty thousand dollars on the table which has been applied for right now and we are using because federal funds haven't improved.

Rep. Thorpe: I heard from the man from Fargo, and it sounded like they had bus drivers that were working at seven dollars an hour, is that what you pay as well?

Werre: Yes, it is very difficult to find them.

Leon Dietrich, Transit rider, spoke in support of the bill. See written testimony.

Rep. Ruby and Rep. Gruchalla have returned. Rep. Kelsch absent.

Vickay Gross, program coordinator and advocate for the Protection and Advocacy for Beneficiaries of Social Security Program, spoke in support of the bill. See written testimony.

Darcy Andahl, on behalf of herself, spoke in support of the bill. See written testimony.

There was no further testimony in support of SB 2314. Chairman Weisz allowed for opposition at this time.

Woodie Barth, ND Farmers Union, spoke in opposition to this bill.

Barth: I want to state for the record that we are NOT against public transportation. We are a very progressive organization and we totally support public transportation. NDFU policy reads we would like tax increases rather than a fee increase or registration increase. We believe a registration fee increase on farmers and ranchers and North Dakotans is an undue burden. We register many vehicles here in ND and it is a fee increase that puts a burden on farmers and ranchers as they operate their farms. We would support this bill in its entirety if the money came from the general fund. Sales tax increase, income tax increase, any other increase rather than registration fee. We do not support this bill as written with the three dollar increase in registration fees because of the burden on the farmers and ranchers.

Rep. Delmore: Do you have members of your own that could benefit from this bill?

Barth: Yes, many rural ND citizens are FU members. Many of those members probably do use public transportation but as I stated, our policy reads that we would prefer tax increases rather than a registration fee increase to support those public transportation systems.

Rep. Delmore: One of the things that is increased is property taxes. Would your organization be happier with an increase in property tax rather than a three dollar fee?

Barth: Our policy doesn't read property taxes in particular. It reads all forms of taxes. We could say property tax increases but all of North Dakotans would have to have a more balanced than we do with registration fee increases. That fee has increases substantially over the last two or three sessions.

Eric Aasmundstad, ND Farm Bureau, spoke in opposition to the bill.

Aasmundstad: I am from Devils Lake area. We are in opposition to this bill; however we are not in opposition to public transportation. We have to make that perfectly clear. I think what Mr. Barth said is a lot of what I have to say. Every session it is three or more dollars in gas tax or registration or something. When we are looking at something over a half a billion dollar budget surplus, I don't think this is the year that we need to raise registration fees three more bucks for anything. Not for public transportation or anything. It would be nice to go through one session, just one, without having to raise registration fees to cover a federal match. Just because it is out there doesn't mean we need to spend it. If we can take it out of the general fund we are not going to complain, but we certainly don't want to see it come out of registration fees. It doesn't only affect agriculture; it affects contractors and anybody that uses a lot of license vehicles. We would just like to see one session where there is no registration increase.

Rep. Thorpe: Out in the rural, we have a lot of farmers that title anywhere from a dozen to one hundred vehicles, so this fee does get high. It is not an equal distribution of the burden.

Aasmundson: Those that license more vehicles are going to carry more of the burden.

Rep. Delmore: Has your organization looked at the difference in what we pay in licensed vehicles compared to other states?

Aasmundson: Yes, we have. We know it's less here, but this isn't Minnesota. That's how we look at it. We have to look at what we do here and not what somebody else has done.

Rep. Delmore: If you would favor another tax increase rather than this, what would your membership be?

Aasmundson: As I stated, I think that when we have a half of a billion dollar budget surplus, we have the funds. We don't have to raise taxes at this time.

There was no further questions from the committee. There was no further testimony on this bill. The hearing was closed. No action was taken at this time.

2007 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Bill/Resolution No. SB 2314

House Transportation Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Hearing Date: 03-02-2007

Recorder Job Number: 4279

Committee Clerk Signature

Minutes:

Chairman Weisz allowed committee discussion on SB 2314. SB 2314 relates to motor vehicle registration fees and funding of public transportation; and to provide notice of fee increases.

Rep. Weisz: I am getting some more information and one of the options is that I have department of transportation working on has to do with being able to find a way to use the fee as federal match. Their testimony indicated that they can't use the fees to match the federal dollars so we are looking to see if we can do that. There does appear to be questions. I got two different versions from the DOT and the providers having to do with the federal funds go to and we will have those answers by next week so we are not going to take it up.

There was no discussion from the committee. No action was taken at this time.

2007 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Bill/Resolution No. SB 2314

House Transportation Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Hearing Date: 03-08-2007

Recorder Job Number: 4735

Committee Clerk Signature

Lisa M Thomas

Minutes:

Chairman Weisz allowed committee discussion on SB 2314. SB 2314 relates to motor vehicle registration fees and funding of public transportation; and to provide notice of fee increases. Rep. Kelsch was absent.

Rep. Weisz: I just talked to them as I was walking over here. They don't have a magic fix.

They are working on it, but there was no indication of a magic fix. As I indicated earlier, the two and a half million that I was trying to get of the fares is just not doable.

Rep. Delmore: I still think that it is an important enough issue that the people in here that testified before this committee, realized importance of this type of transit, not only for urban people but people with special needs who don't have access to cars, etc. We are the policy setters I say we pass the bill and appropriations, maybe it won't be the entire fee that we would like to see, maybe they will turn it down or maybe they can find an answer to fix it, but I think it's a very important bill.

Rep. Ruby: I am not sure on the license fees if that would go to appropriations, would it?

Rep. Weisz: It does now. The rule in this session now is that, last session it would not have.

Rep. Ruby: I really have a problem with this. I was hoping we would get through one session that I've been here without an increase to our license fees. I know the Chairman is working on

other areas and things possibly in the budget and there are other options and things getting worked on that don't need this bill alive to accomplish that. I know how important it is to not leave the money on the table when it's available, so I am not going to support the bill. This source of revenue not increased for once whether for farming or anything. For most people here who only have one or two vehicles, it's not very much, but there are a lot of businesses that have multiple vehicles, including mine, and farmers are the same way. That gets to be a fair jump. Just for mine would be sixty dollars a year. I am not that big of a business and I have never used transit and that is fine to pay three dollars I have never used already, but to pay another three, I am not ready to support that.

Rep. Weisz: Rep. Ruby is right from the standpoint that I don't want to leave federal dollars on the table. Regardless of how this committee may deal with it, I will still try to come up with some possible help or solution. My constituency has a real problem with the three dollar registration increase and I struggle with that. At the same time, there is a lot of federal dollars on the table here that I don't see that we will be able to match. I won't end the discussion or the intent to try to come up with something else regardless of how this may turn out. Even if the three dollars will pass, I will still work on trying to come up with some other ways to match because this is like going to be an ongoing problem in the future, but there does appear to be a shift on the federal part. They love mass transit and public transit.

Rep. Delmore: I understand the three dollar increase, but many of the people in this room and in the state of ND spend three dollars on things much less worth while than what this bill does. Secondly, we still have rates that are much lower than even surrounding states as far as what it costs. I understand your point. If the people on the floor decide they don't want to do this, that's fine, but I think it's worth passing out and I am ready to make a motion.

Rep. Delmore moved a DO PASS. Rep. Gruchalla seconded.

Rep. Ruby: The efforts are still going to be made to find this money so however it can be done through appropriations and the DOT budget. I think if we get emails from people, what I am going to say is that I don't think the issue is dead. Another part of the argument is we heard more of the argument that we need to do this to match federal dollars then we heard for the need. I don't know what the rate is, but it is a highly subsidized rate. I know sometimes there are people that pay more, but maybe they are people that can pay more.

Roll Call Vote: 5 yes. 7 no. 1 absent.

Motion failed.

Rep. Ruby moved a DO NOT PASS. Rep. Sukut seconded.

Rep. Gruchalla: I heard Rep. Ruby say that if we don't pass this bill out, that may not be the end of it?

Rep. Weisz: I can't promise anything because I can't speak for other. I will, two things I will do, I will personally promise to see if we can find a way to somehow flow some match, some dollars that can just be used for match. I will also try to find some money in the DOT budget to flow straight to them without a registration increase. I will give you my word that I will try to push for that. I will try to add money out of the highway fund straight to the public transit, but I am one of many.

Rep. Price: I think that I have probably voted for this every session that it has come up because it is a public thing that I think we need to do. I don't think that these people would understand us raising the fees three dollars with what surplus we have. I think we should fund it straight out of highway funds, at least this time. For that reason, some people three dollars is going to make a difference. We've got some money, let's fund it and I think that everybody in this room doesn't disagree that it's a good thing. We never should have started on registration fees, but we didn't have the money.

Rep. Weisz: I will work and be on the conference committee of the DOT budget. Whether I convince everyone else obviously, the Senate passed it out, so I have to assume the Senate is going to look favorably on more money for public transit. I am going to do what I can. I have a problem leaving federal money. I don't know how these locals are going to come up with the match.

Rep. Delmore: I just remember increases that we voted for in this very committee to match highway funds. This bill affects some of our most vulnerable citizens.

Rep. Weisz: You are right Rep. Delmore and that is why we do have money that we can use in highway fund that we don't need now or won't need to match federal highway funds.

Roll call vote: 8 yes. 4 no. 1 absent.

Carrier: Rep. Weisz

Date: 3-8-07
 Roll Call Vote #: _____

2007 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE ROLL CALL VOTES 2314
 BILL/RESOLUTION NO. _____

House Transportation Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number _____

Action Taken Dolass

Motion Made By Delmore Seconded By Gruchalla

Representatives	Yes	No	Representatives	Yes	No
Chairman Weisz		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Rep. Delmore	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Vice Chairman Ruby		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Rep. Gruchalla	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Rep. Dosch		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Rep. Myxter	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Rep. Kelsch	Absent		Rep. Schmidt	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Rep. Owens		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Rep. Thorpe	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Rep. Price		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
Rep. Sukut		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
Rep. Vigesaa		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			

Total Yes 9 No 5

Absent 1

Floor Assignment _____

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

Date: 3-8-07
 Roll Call Vote #: 2

2007 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE ROLL CALL VOTES
 BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2314

House Transportation Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number _____

Action Taken Do Not Pass

Motion Made By Ruby Seconded By Sukut

Representatives	Yes	No	Representatives	Yes	No
Chairman Weisz	✓		Rep. Delmore		✓
Vice Chairman Ruby	✓		Rep. Gruchalla		✓
Rep. Dosch	✓		Rep. Myxter		✓
Rep. Kelsch	- Absent -		Rep. Schmidt		✓
Rep. Owens	✓		Rep. Thorpe	✓	
Rep. Price	✓				
Rep. Sukut	✓				
Rep. Vigesaa	✓				

Total Yes 8 No 4

Absent 1

Floor Assignment Weisz

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

SB 2314: Transportation Committee (Rep. Weisz, Chairman) recommends DO NOT PASS
(8 YEAS, 4 NAYS, 1 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). SB 2314 was placed on the
Fourteenth order on the calendar.

2007 TESTIMONY

SB 2314

①

SB 2314

Chairman Lee, members of the Senate Transportation Committee, my name is Tom Fiebiger, Senator, District 45. I am pleased to appear before you in support of Senate Bill 2314.

Public transportation is an important cost effective service needed and used by many of our citizens. Nationwide, it is my understanding there are millions of people with disabilities that have trouble obtaining the transportation they need. Some people with disabilities that want to work are unable to do so because of inadequate transportation. Some cannot socialize, get to medical appointments or enjoy many of the things those of us with vehicles take for granted. In rural areas there continue to be large gaps in available public transportation and, importantly, the necessary funding to provide the needed services.

In Fargo, many riders of public transportation rely upon the system to get to work and access health care and to be able to get anywhere. It provides a critical service to our metropolitan area.

This bill will help provide much needed financial support for our public transportation fund and make a huge difference in the quality of life of a significant number of North Dakotans. That is difficult to place a dollar amount on.

Chairman Lee, members of the Senate Transportation Committee, I respectfully request you give a "Do Pass" to Senate Bill 2314.

Testimony Presented on Senate Bill 2314 to the

Senate Transportation Committee
Senator Gary A. Lee, Chair

by Jim Gilmour, Director of Planning and Development
City of Fargo

January 26, 2007

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

The City of Fargo respectfully requests a "Do Pass" recommendation for Senate Bill 2314. Public transportation is an essential public service in North Dakota, to both urban and rural areas. Many North Dakotans rely upon public transportation for their basic necessities. It enables people to live independently in their homes longer, thus decreasing the need for costly nursing homes or limited care facilities. Transit is important to working people who do not have a car. It provides a way to get to work, shop, and reach medical services.

A 2006 survey of Fargo fixed route bus riders found that 46% of the riders would not have been able to make that trip without the bus, and 28% said they could have made the trip, but not easily. Only 48% of bus riders have access to an automobile.

Other benefits of transit include allowing households to save money by eliminating a need for a second car and a reduction in the need for parking in the downtown area and near NDSU. As NDSU expands its campus into downtown Fargo and downtown continues to revitalize, transit needs to play a more important role in providing transportation to this area.

The City of Fargo operates 9 fixed route buses on weekdays and 7 fixed route buses on Saturdays. On days that NDSU is in session, an additional 3 fixed route buses provide service focused on needs of the University. Since 1999, ridership on the fixed route bus system has increased from 429,000 rides to 900,000 rides in 2006. Paratransit ridership has also increased; from 23,000 in 2000 to 36,000 in 2006. As paratransit rides have grown, the cost of operating the system has grown by 50% from \$300,000 a year in 2000 to about \$500,000 in 2006.

The budget for the Fargo/West Fargo bus system is \$3.1 million a year. Funding is from the following sources:

- Federal Transit Administration \$1,500,000
- State of North Dakota \$190,000
- Fares and other Revenue \$475,000
- City of Fargo and West Fargo \$785,000
- North Dakota State University \$125,000

The City of Fargo recently adopted a 5 year plan that includes additional paratransit service to meet our growing needs, additional service on two routes that operate at high capacity, adding two new routes to service the newly developed areas, and adding demand response service to areas that are not served by fixed routes. The cost of this new service is almost \$900,000 a year. Additional state funding along

with available federal funding would allow the City to pay for expanded service and add an additional two of the proposed 4 bus routes.

The specific needs are outlined below:

- Growing Paratransit Needs – Cities with fixed route bus service are required to provide paratransit service. I would estimate that Fargo will need an additional \$100,000 a year to meet the growing needs for this service.
- Increase for Route 15 – Route 15 provides service along 13th Avenue South between the West Acres area and the downtown area. A bus operates on a 60 minute frequency. Ridership has grown to over 115,000 passengers a year, and a proposed route change will likely increase it more. At peak times, the bus is very crowded. This route needs a second bus which will provide the 30 minute frequency desired by many transit riders. Increasing the frequency to 30 minutes is expected to attract even more transit riders. The estimated cost of providing this added service Monday through Saturday is \$183,000 a year.
- Add a new Southwest Fargo Route – Many neighborhoods in southwest Fargo are not served by fixed route transit. An additional route is needed to serve these neighborhoods. This new route would operate through south and southwest Fargo and provide a connection to the West Acres shopping center and a transit transfer point at K-mart on South University Drive. The estimated cost of the new route is \$153,000 a year.

- Increase for Route 16 – Route 16 provides service along 17th Avenue South between the West Acres shopping center and the downtown area. Important destinations served include Dakota Clinic, MeritCare Hospital, and Fargo South High School. A bus operates on a 60 minute frequency. Ridership has grown to 100,000 passengers a year. At peak times, the bus is crowded. Like Route 15, this route needs a second bus, which will provide the 30 minute frequency desired by many transit riders. Increasing the frequency to 30 minutes is expected to attract even more transit riders. The estimated cost of this additional service is \$153,000 a year.
- New 25th Street Route – The transit plan identified a need for a new route that would provide north/south service on 25th Street. It would provide service into the downtown area or to NDSU on the north and extend south to 32nd Avenue South. This would provide additional service to south Fargo and provide important destinations such as Southeast Human Services Center, two grocery stores, and two MeritCare clinics. The estimated cost of this new route is \$153,000 a year.
- Demand Response Service – There are areas in Fargo that need public transportation service, but do not have enough riders to justify fixed route bus service. These include the industrial park and new low income and elderly housing developments in south Fargo. I estimate the cost of starting demand response service for these areas at \$167,000 a year.

In summary, the City of Fargo priority public transportation expansion needs are \$909,000 a year. The proposed increase would provide Fargo with an additional \$190,000 to match federal funds, and allow the City of Fargo to implement roughly half of the service that is needed. The City of Fargo already has \$500,000 in federal transit funds from previous years that can be used to implement this needed service, but cannot afford to provide the local funds needed to implement this service.

The City of Fargo strongly supports the increased state funding for the transit system operated by the City. In addition, the increases for the Fargo Senior Commission and Handi-Wheels are also important as they provide complimentary demand response bus service to residents with special needs or those who need a ride to a location not served by the fixed route bus system.

Mom who tries MAT bus becomes loyal customer

Latha Swenson finds transit a perfect fit for her family

The following excerpts are from a letter sent to Metro Area Transit last fall by customer Latha Swenson. Her words are reprinted with her permission.

"My first pregnancy brought on a disease called eclampsia, and with this disease, I had seizures after my son was born. Because I had seizures, I was not allowed to drive for six months. I felt awfully cooped up in our apartment, and since the bus went right by our house, I decided to look into where it went.

"I looked up the MAT Web site and discovered that the bus went right to the mall. One February afternoon, I decided to pack up my baby boy, diaper bag and stroller and head to the mall.



Latha Swenson and her son have found the Metro Area Transit bus system a great way to travel around town.

"In July, I was able to drive again. Then one of our vehicles died, and we thought of trying to function with one car. My husband started taking our minivan to work and back, and I was left without a vehicle. When I wanted to get out of the house, I simply took the bus to the mall.

I've taken different routes around the city, and I feel very comfortable taking the bus. Our son absolutely loves riding the bus, and "bus" was one of his first words!

"Overall, I've found MAT to be convenient and an enjoyable experience. The drivers are always friendly and helpful. While it can take longer to get to your destination than driving, it is so nice not to have to heat up your car in the winter or drive in a stifling car in the summer. Instead of battling traffic and rude drivers, you can sit back and relax; read a book or a magazine. With rising gas prices, it feels nice to know you're not putting unnecessary miles on a vehicle.

"I wish more people would think to take the bus to the mall, to run errands, and to get to work! It is easier and more convenient than most people think!"

I was surprised at how nice it was to take the bus. It was toasty warm and very clean."

"I was surprised at how nice it was to take the bus. It was toasty warm and very clean. It was very easy to get my stroller on and off the bus. I started taking the bus often.

Take your bike when you take the bus!

Each Metro Area Transit (MAT) bus can carry up to two bicycles on racks located on the front of the bus. If the nearest MAT bus route is beyond walking distance, bike on over to it, load your bike and away you go!

Before using the Bike & Bus rack on MAT, you need to get a free permit from the Ground

Transportation Center. A signed consent form must be completed by a parent/guardian before a permit is issued to children under the age of 18.

A MAT team member will make sure you feel comfortable using the bike rack before you receive a permit. For more information, call MAT at 232-7500, or visit www.matbus.com.

(17)

MR. CHAIRMAN, SENATORS, MY NAME IS ROBIN WERRE AND I AM THE DIRECTOR OF BIS-MAN TRANSIT BOARD HERE IN BISMARCK. I AM HERE TO TESTIFY IN SUPPORT OF SB2314.

BIS-MAN TRANSIT IS A PUBLIC TRANSIT SYSTEM, WHICH OPERATES A DOOR TO DOOR PARA TRANSIT SYSTEM FOR ELDERLY, 60 YEARS OF AGE OR OLDER AND/OR DISABLED INDIVIDUALS. WE OPERATE ON A 24-HOUR A DAY, SEVEN DAYS PER WEEK. CURRENTLY WE HAVE 8900 CERTIFIED RIDERS AND DURING 2006 WE GAVE 190,194 RIDES. TO PROVIDE THESE RIDES WE DROVE 994,414 MILES.

WE ALSO OPERATE CAPITAL AREA TRANSIT, BETTER KNOWN AS THE CAT. THIS IS A PUBLIC SERVICE AND OPERATES ON A FIXED ROUTE. WE CURRENTLY HAVE ELEVEN ROUTES AND PROVIDED 104,717 RIDES DURING 2006. WE ALSO DROVE 290,376 MILES.

DUE TO THE INCREASED PRICE OF GAS, DURING 2006 WE HAVE PAID A FUEL SURCHARGE OF \$169,640 ABOVE OUR CONTRACT AGREEMENT AMOUNT. MONEY THAT ORGINALLY WOULD HAVE BEEN USED AS MATCH.

DURING 2006 WE HAD A 2.3 MILLION DOLLAR BUDGET OF WHICH \$967,728 WAS FEDERAL FUNDS, \$875,448 LOCAL FUNDS AND \$490,250 FAREBOX. IT TAKES ALMOST ALL OF OUR FUNDING T PROVIDE JUST CURRENT OPERATING COSTS.

WE CURRENTLY HAVE \$1,961,422 FEDERAL FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR CAPITAL, IF WE CAN PROVIDE THE LOCAL MATCH, WHICH WOULD BE \$566,134. STATE FUNDS ARE CONSIDERED LOCAL MATCH. IT IS ALSO VERY DIFFICULT TO CONTINUING A PUBLIC TRANSIT SYSTEM WITHOUT VEHICLES AND MAINTENANCE OF THOSE VEHICLES AND FACILITIES.

WITH THE INCREASE OF STATE DOLLARS FROM THE \$3 DOLLAR INCREASE IN VEHICLE REGISTRATION IT WOULD PROVIDE APPROXIMATELY \$188,000 PER YEAR FOR BIS-MAN TRANSIT TO USE AS MATCH. OVER A THREE YEAR PERIOD THIS WOULD BE AROUND \$564,000.

AS YOU CAN SEE THE STATE FUNDING IS VERY IMPORTANT TO MAINTAIN A TRANSIT SYSTEM LIKE BIS-MAN TRANSIT AND ALL OTHER PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION IN NORTH DAKOTA. BECAUSE OF THIS NEED I ASK THAT YOU SUPPORT SB2314, THANK YOU

Testimony Before The Senate Transportation Committee January 26, 2007

Good Morning Chairman Lee, and members of the Transportation Committee.

My name is Carol Anderson, I am the director of West River Transit, which provides transit services to six counties; McLean, Morton, Mercer Oliver, Grant and the Rural Burleigh area. I am here in support of SB #2314, for the three dollar increase to the State Aid for Public Transportation fund.

West River Transit transports 50,000 plus rural rides and covers over 168,000 sq. miles per year for the six county area. Many of our riders are elderly and very frail, some traveling nine hours to and from, for their doctor appointments and other needs, this is their only means of transportation. With those time frames and miles, come high expenses, which can limit our agencies delivery of services. Utilizing these idle federal funds is a need we can not overlook.

Currently our budget is \$400,000 we receive \$210,000. of federal funds, but need to match that dollar amount by \$170,250. We have \$107,000. match available from our current State Aid, but leaves us with a \$63,250. shortfall, plus the additional funds needed to complete our budget.

With the three dollar increase, we would be able to draw all the federal funds available to us, as it is now we are leaving \$62,463 of federal funds unused. This increase is needed to operate our counties as needed by our communities and possibly expand the serve needed by the general public of North Dakota.

We need your support for SB#2314.

Thank you for your time, and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

5

*Same
given to
Senate
approps
and
to
House
Transportation*

Testimony

North Dakota Disabilities Advocacy Consortium

SB 2314

Motor Vehicle Registration fees and funding of Public Transportation
Senate Transportation Committee

January 26, 2007

Chairman Lee, members of the Senate Transportation Committee, I am James M. Moench, Executive Director of the North Dakota Disabilities Advocacy Consortium (NDDAC). The Consortium is made up of 22 organizations (see attached list) concerned with addressing the issues that affect people with disabilities. We are very interested in adding funding for support of home and community based care initiatives. Not only is home and community based care the right thing to do for people who require some assistance to manage their daily lives, it is the most cost effective way to provide services. We applaud the efforts of the Legislature to keep North Dakota citizens in their homes and communities as long as possible.

Adequate transportation is a key component to preserving independence. Public transportation options are especially scarce in rural North Dakota

NDDAC would like to go on record supporting SB 2314. We support increasing the motor vehicle registration fee and we support the added funding to the counties to enhance their public transportation system.

Transportation means freedom. At every meeting with people with disabilities, at some point, the need for more transportation comes up. Lack of transportation affects everything in a person's life from doctor's appointments to having an adequate social life. I have watched my own mother as she and her friends have aged. Once they can no longer drive themselves, their world shrinks quickly. The provision in SB 2314 or something like them would go a long way toward keeping people independent and in their own homes and communities as they age and/or become disabled.

The organizations in the NDDAC urge the committee to support adequate funding for North Dakota's transit systems as well as expanded funding for home and community based services especially in rural North Dakota.

I appreciate this opportunity to testify on behalf of the NDDAC and look forward to working with you over the course of this legislative session.

Thank you.

NORTH DAKOTA DISABILITIES ADVOCACY CONSORTIUM

2006 Membership

1. AARP
2. Dakota Center for Independent Living
3. Family Voices of North Dakota
4. Freedom Resource Center for Independent Living
5. Independence Center for Independent Living
6. ND APSE: The Network on Employment
7. ND Association of the Blind
8. ND Association of the Deaf
9. ND Association for the Disabled
10. ND Center for Persons with Disabilities (NDCPD)
11. ND Children's Caucus
12. Fair Housing of the Dakotas
13. ND Fed. of Families for Children's Mental Health
14. ND Human Rights Coalition
15. ND IPAT Consumer Advisory Committee
16. ND Mental Health Assn.
17. ND Statewide Living Council
18. Options Resource Center for Independent Living
19. Protection & Advocacy Project
20. The Arc of Bismarck
21. The Arc of Cass County
22. The Arc of North Dakota

Updated: July 10, 2006

Legislators:

I am testifying in favor of this bill in support of additional funding for public transportation. My name is Wayne Triska and I am a teacher and Orientation and Mobility Specialist for students with vision impairments. I have taught in the Bismarck School System for 28 years.

One of the greatest hurdles a person with vision impairments has on a daily basis is something we take for granted everyday as we get into our cars in the morning and drive to work. Without independent mobility, a person with vision impairments or physical disability is required to plan in advance to solicit a family member to transport them, use a taxi, walk or use public transportation. Family members are not always available for transporting, taxi's can be very expensive, and walking is many times not an option. The only predictable and cost effective way to travel to work, the doctor, grocery store, etc. is to use the public transportation.

Public transportation has heightened my students' self-concept. Learning to use the bus system has given them a sense of independence. They are now independently able to jump on the bus from their house or nearest bus stop and independently go shopping, to the bank, or just to meet friends. To a teenager with a vision impairment, this is huge. I teach my students how to use the public transit system including reading bus schedules, rules of bus travel including courtesy, planning routes and transfers. This is their first step in truly becoming an independent traveler. The public transportation system is extremely important to me, my students, and people with disabilities.

I urge your consideration of this bill.

Wayne Triska

Testimony

Senate Bill 2314

Transportation Committee

Senator Gary Lee, Chairman

January 26, 2007

Same given to House Transportation

Good morning, Senator Lee and Members of the Senate Transportation Committee. My name is Darcy Andahl. I live in Bismarck, District 32. I'm here in support of Senate Bill 2314.

The Capital Area Transit (CAT) and Bis-Man transit are very important for senior citizens and people with disabilities, who, like myself don't drive. Access to public transportation allows me to be independent. I can do my shopping, get to medical appointments, participate in social outings, and basically do whatever I want all on my own without relying on others to get around town. Maintaining my independence is very important to me.

This proposed minimal increase in vehicle registrations will hopefully enhance public transportation around the state.

I would like to recommend that one ugly word in this bill that is used twice be changed. Please look at line 18 on

page 1 and line 7 on page 2. Using the word "**handicapped**" is not respectful to people with disabilities. It is not polite to label people like that. My name is Darcy...I am not a handicap. I am "**a person with a disability**".

I've included some material about the importance of using People First Language and it shows you lots of examples.

Thank you for your time and for listening to me today. I'd be happy to answer any questions.

Darcy Andahl
158 E Indiana Avenue #104
Bismarck, ND 58504
250-6549
dandahl@bis.midco.net

A Few Words About **PEOPLE FIRST LANGUAGE** by Kathie Snow

Visit www.disabilityisnatural.com to see the original, full-length article.

People with disabilities constitute our nation's largest minority group. It's also the most inclusive and most diverse: both genders, any sexual orientation, and all ages, religions, socioeconomic levels, and ethnicities are represented. Yet the only thing people with disabilities have in common is being on

The difference between the right word and the almost right word is the difference between lightning and the lightning bug.

Mark Twain

the receiving end of societal misunderstanding, prejudice, and discrimination. And this largest minority group is the only one which *anyone can join, at any time*: at birth, in the split second of an accident, through illness, or during the aging process. If and when it happens to *you*, how will you want to be described?

Words matter! Old and inaccurate descriptors perpetuate negative stereotypes and reinforce an incredibly powerful attitudinal barrier, which is the *greatest obstacle facing individuals with disabilities*. A disability is, first and foremost, *a medical diagnosis*, and when we define people by their diagnoses, we devalue and disrespect them as individuals. Do *you* want to be known primarily by your psoriasis, gynecological history, or the warts on your behind? Using medical diagnoses incorrectly—as a measure of a person's abilities or potential—*can ruin people's lives*.

Embrace a new paradigm: "Disability is a natural part of the human experience..." (*U.S. Developmental Disabilities Bill of Rights Act*). Yes, *disability is natural*, and it can be *redefined* as a "body part that works differently." A person with spina bifida has legs that work differently, a person with Down syndrome learns differently, and so forth. People can no more be *defined* by

their medical diagnoses than others can be defined by gender, ethnicity, religion, or other traits!

A diagnosis may also become a *sociopolitical passport* for services, entitlements, or legal protections. Thus, medical, educational, legal, or similar settings are the *only places* where the use of a diagnosis is relevant.

People First Language puts the person *before* the disability, and describes what a person *has*, not who a person *is*. Are you "cancerous" or do you have cancer? Is a person "handicapped/disabled" or does she "have a disability"? Using a diagnosis as a defining characteristic reflects prejudice, and also robs the person of the opportunity to define himself.

Let's reframe "problems" and into "needs." Instead of, "He has behavior problems," we can say, "He needs behavior supports." Instead of, "She has reading problems," we can say, "She needs large print." And let's eliminate the "special needs" descriptor—it generates pity and low expectations!

A person's self-image is tied to the words used about him. People First Language reflects good manners, not "political correctness," and it was started by individuals who said, "*We are not our disabilities!*" We can create a new paradigm of disability and change the world in the process. Using People First Language is right—*just do it, now!*

A FEW EXAMPLES OF PEOPLE FIRST LANGUAGE

Say:	Instead of:
Children/adults with disabilities.	Handicapped, disabled, special needs.
He has a cognitive disability.	He's mentally retarded.
She has autism.	She's autistic.
He has Down syndrome.	He's Down's/mongoloid.
She has a learning disability.	She's learning disabled.
He has a physical disability.	He's a quadriplegic/crippled.
She uses a wheelchair.	She's confined to/wheelchair bound.
He receives special ed services.	He's in special ed; a special ed kid.
People without disabilities.	Normal or healthy people.
Communicates with her eyes/device/etc.	Is non-verbal.
Congenital disability/Brain injury	Birth defect/Brain damaged
Accessible parking, hotel room, etc.	Handicapped parking, hotel room, etc.

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EXAMPLES OF PEOPLE FIRST LANGUAGE

SAY:

People with disabilities.

He has a cognitive disability/diagnosis.

She has autism (or a diagnosis of...).

He has Down syndrome (or a diagnosis of...)

She has a learning disability (diagnosis).

He has a physical disability (diagnosis).

She's of short stature/she's a little person.

He has a mental health condition/diagnosis.

She uses a wheelchair/mobility chair.

He receives special ed services.

She has a developmental delay.

Children without disabilities.

Communicates with her eyes/device/etc.

Customer

Congenital disability

Brain injury

Accessible parking, hotel room, etc.

She needs . . . or she uses . . .

INSTEAD OF:

The handicapped or disabled.

He's mentally retarded.

She's autistic.

He's Down's; a mongoloid.

She's learning disabled.

He's a quadriplegic/is crippled.

She's a dwarf/midget.

He's emotionally disturbed/mentally ill.

She's confined to/is wheelchair bound.

He's in special ed.

She's developmentally delayed.

Normal or healthy kids.

Is non-verbal.

Client, consumer, recipient, etc.

Birth defect

Brain damaged

Handicapped parking, hotel room, etc.

She has a problem with . . .

She has special needs.

Keep thinking—there are many other descriptors we need to change!

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Excerpted from Kathie's People First Language article, available at www.disabilityisnatural.com.

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VISIT WWW.DISABILITYISNATURAL.COM FOR OTHER NEW WAYS OF THINKING!

⑧

**PUBLIC TESTIMONY SB 2314
SENATE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
HONORABLE GARY A. LEE, CHAIRMAN
JANUARY 26, 2007 10:00 A.M.**

*Some given to Senate
to make appropriate
and to House Transportation*

Good Morning Chairman Lee and Members of the Senate Transportation Committee:

My name is Leon Dietrich and I live in Bismarck, District 32. I work as a custodian for Bismarck Public Schools at Solheim Elementary, in south Bismarck.

I use the Transit System and CAT bus on a daily basis for work, grocery shopping and to go to events in the city. I also sometimes take the CAT bus to Gateway Mall to go shopping or walking.

I think one of the reasons Bismarck is such a good place to live is because we have a good transit system in place. Even if you do not own a car you can still get around town using the CAT bus.

Sometimes the Transit is running late because there are so many people trying to use it. When it is running late then people end up late for work or meetings. The drivers try really hard to stick to a schedule but with so many people needing the service they cannot help it.

I urge you to increase funding for transit so they have more money to meet the demand and so other cities and towns can have transit services also.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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Testimony of Tom Alexander
Senate Bill 2314
Senate Transportation Committee
January 26, 2007

Chairman Lee and members of the committee, my name is Tom Alexander. I am employed as the Project Director for the ND Medicaid Infrastructure Grant/Comprehensive Employment Systems Initiative (CES) with the North Dakota Center for Person with Disabilities at Minot State University. I am here in support of Senate Bill 2314 that will provide for increased funding for public transportation through increased vehicle registration fees.

Over the last five years, the CES project I direct has been studying and improving ways to connect people with disabilities to employers who need workers. This is a hot topic of conversation among economic development and disability sectors statewide. This conversation cannot be held without discussing transportation issues in North Dakota communities.

Our project spent the better part of 2006 developing a five year strategic plan that will address employment issues for people with disabilities in ND. This process was completely stakeholder driven and focus groups were held in every region of the state as well as employment focus groups in four regions of the state. In each and every meeting access to Transportation was a key issue. Therefore, transportation was chosen by stakeholders and our Leadership Council of the grant as one of the top priorities of the strategic plan. The stakeholders identified one key theme over and over again: **The elderly and/or people with disabilities in rural communities need affordable-accessible transportation.**

Our project supports SB 2314. We urge a DO PASS and I would be more than happy to answer any questions that you may have. Thank you.

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Good morning Senator Lee and committee members. My name is Christina McComish. I am a former student of the Underwood School District now living independently in Bismarck and proudly attending Century High School.

I am here to testify in support of Senate Bill 2314 with the following comments.

Due to my vision impairment, I will never be able to drive. I will never pay the registration fee that I am hoping will be approved. My parents however do register 5 vehicles and are also supportive of this bill.

I currently use both Bis-Man transit and the CAT bus. Since I am on my own, these two systems allow me to get to my medical appointments and do my grocery shopping. They fulfill a very necessary need in my life.

I would like the 3 dollar increase to go toward expanding service times, routes and the hiring of additional drivers. Twice I have been left at Walmart because they were short drivers and skipped several of the scheduled route times, after they had dropped me off. The following day the driver was very apologetic and said that they had been short of drivers the day before. All the drivers have been very nice and willing to put out the ramp for me. All the drivers on my routes now know how to run the ramps.

I would like to see the hours expanded to include Sunday. Currently I have to do my shopping using the CAT bus on Saturday. I get on the CAT bus at about 8 and usually get to one store and home by noon. This does depend on where I am going and how many transfers I need plus the wait time in between each transfer. This means that it takes me about 4 hours to do my grocery shopping.

I do not take the transit bus to do my grocery shopping, because of the 4 dollar round trip cost, the 24 hour notice that is required to set up a ride and because of the 45 minute pickup drop off window the transit bus would not save me any time.

The CAT cost is 1 dollar round trip, and I can just get on it and ride according to the set schedule. That is if the roads are clear for me to get to the bus stop with my wheel chair. The main reason I live where I do is because it is on the CAT route

Thank you for your time and attention. If you have any questions, I will try to answer them.

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**Testimony Before The
Senate Transportation Committee
January 26th, 2007**

Chairman Lee and members of the Committee, my name is Paul Grindeland, I am the Director of Transportation at Fargo Senior Services. Our agency coordinates senior citizen and general public transportation services for the Fargo/West Fargo metro area and seven counties in southeastern North Dakota. I am here to speak in support of the State Aid for Public Transit funding included in Senate Bill 2314.

The State Aid for Public Transportation Fund was established by the North Dakota Legislature in 1989 to provide funding for the operation of public transit systems throughout the state. Our agency supports the proposed increase in SB 2314 because of the following factors:

- The continuing need to expand service: Even after the funding increases in 2005 we still have unmet transit needs in our urban and rural areas. This need can be partially explained by the population projections in our region – in 1990 our region had 30,962 persons 60 years and over; it is projected that by 2010 this population will grow to 44,042. More telling will be the growth of the 80+ year old population: 6,597 in 1990 and projected to be 11,361 by 2010 (North Dakota State Data Center). In the Fargo/West Fargo metro area, where our service compliments the City of Fargo Metropolitan Area Transit city bus system, any increased funding we receive would be used to add another vehicle to serve a growing senior population. In rural areas, we forecast an increased number of medical trips to the major medical facilities in our region as our population ages.

- Need for local match of Federal Funds: State Aid for Public Transit funding has helped our agency, and many others across the state, utilize Section 5311 federal funding which is allocated on a 50/50 match basis.
- Transit Coordination projects: At the present time our agency is working with other transit providers in our area to coordinate and expand transportation options for senior citizens and the general public. We expect the need to create new service will come from these negotiations.

State Aid for Public Transit funding has allowed our transportation service to help those most in need whether that is someone from a remote rural area needing a ride for medical treatment, or in the urban area where we compliment the existing bus system by providing a more cost effective ride to those senior individuals who cannot use fixed route or paratransit services. I had hoped a few of our riders could have attended this meeting to speak on behalf of the transportation services we provide with State Aid for Public Transit funding, however the ride and wait would have been too difficult for these individuals. Instead, I have two written testimonies from our clients and with your permission I would like to share them with you.

In closing I compliment the Department of Transportation and its staff for its handling of this Public Transportation Fund and thank them for their assistance over the years with our transit program. Thank you for your time. I would be happy to answer any questions.



2512

Dr. Esther H. Leser, Ph.D., T.O.C.

Professor Emerita of Germanic, Romance
and Comparative Philology

Telephone
(701) 343-2595

1451 32 Str. N.E.
Arvilla, ND 58214
USA

January 19, 2007

Members of the Fargo Senior Bus Commission

Dear members of the Commission,

RE: Steele County Senior Bus Services

I have the advantage of regularly riding the Steele County Senior Bus. It is an important factor in my life, which helps me to attend medical, legal, and other important appointments. This allows me to live a regulated, normal existence.

It is important for me to point out the professional and personal excellence of your staff. The dependability and kindness of these people in your service must be praised. The affordability of the program makes it possible for retirees to use it.

This bus service permits me to keep my country home, even though I do not drive any longer. It also permits me to keep contact with the world which I was part of before my retirement. The medical needs of seniors are served and appointments are kept due to the dependability of your staff.

I wish to express my appreciation to the members organizing this service. It meets an important need for rural senior citizens.

Thank you for your excellent service. Truly yours,

Thank you for the bus service
you supply in my area. I am in a wheel chair
and do not have my own van lift or drivers
license. If your bus did not run I would
be forced to leave my home, with no way
to get to and from medical appts, it would
be impossible for me to live independantly.
The bus driver is always prompt and very
helpful. ~~The driver~~ They are very friendly
drivers and also the people who help with
setting up driving times when I call in.
Thank you very much for providing me
with safe transportation to and from Appts.

Donald

SB 2314

- **Public transportation is an only means of transportation for many North Dakotans, including seniors and the disabled, providing more than 2.4 million rides covering 4.6 million miles in 2006.**
- **Both rural and urban transit systems in ND are eligible for federal match money for operating and capital expenses but cannot access all of these needed funds because they do not have adequate state and local aid.**
- Currently, the DOT public transportation fund receives \$3 from each motor vehicle registration fee, raising approximately \$4.7 million per biennium. These funds are used by rural and urban transit providers for operating and capital costs and are matched 50/50 and 80/20, respectively, with federal funds.
- **Additionally, cities and counties provide a statewide total of approximately \$5 million per biennium to their area transit systems that can be used to match federal funds.**
- **Transportation fares (approximately \$2 million total for ND in 2006), the amount charged to the riders, cannot be used for federal match dollars.**
- At this very point in time, there is a need for approximately \$2.5 million by rural and urban transit providers in ND that could be used to access matching federal dollars to maintain transit routes and systems facing increased operating costs (including increased fuel and labor costs) and vehicle costs (maintaining and upgrading buses and transportation vehicles).
- SB 2314 would increase motor vehicle registration fees by \$3 for deposit in the DOT public transportation fund and
- Provides for a notice in each renewal registration indicating the additional \$3 is for public transportation in North Dakota.
- The projected 2008-09 federal funds available to rural transit systems for operating costs are \$11.2 million (a \$3.2 million increase from this biennium), with an additional \$7 million of matching federal funds available for urban providers. Meaning rural and urban providers will need \$18 million to access the needed federal funds to maintain routes and address increasing operating costs.
- With an additional \$3, rural and urban transit providers will be able to access needed dollars to match federal funds to continue to operate and enhance public transit systems which provide necessary transportation for many North Dakotans, including seniors and the disabled.

Contacts Submitted by Ken Tupa

[Home](#)
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Bulletin Board

E-Mail Us:

Region 1

[Williston Council for the Aging](#)

Region 2

[Kenmare Wheels & Meals](#)

[Minot Commission on Aging](#)

[Souris Basin Transportation \(Minot\)](#)

<http://www.sourisbasintransit.com>

[Tri-County Senior Meals & Services \(Rugby\)](#)

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[Senior Meals and Services \(Devils Lake\)](#)

Region 4

[Greater Grand Forks Senior Citizens Association, Inc.](#)

[Pembina County Meals & Transportation](#)

[Walsh County Nutrition & Transportation Program](#)

Region 5

Region 1

Williston Council for the Aging/Region 1

Jerry Engel

18 Main

Williston ND 58801

Phone: (701) 577-6751

E-Mail: seniors60@yahoo.com

Region 2

Kenmare Wheels & Meals

Linda Freeman

P.O. Box 481

Kenmare ND 58746

Phone: (701) 385-4364

E-Mail: wandm@restel.net

Minot Commission on Aging

Charlotte Zahn

21 1st Ave SE

Minot ND 58701

Phone: (701) 852-0561

E-Mail: mcoapsc@ndak.net

Souris Basin Transportation

Darrell Francis

P.O. Box 2211

309 1st Ave NE

Minot ND 58702

Phone: (701) 852-8008

Website: www.sourisbasintransit.cc

E-Mail: sbtransit@srt.com

Tri-County Senior Meals and Services

Myrna Muffenbier

125 S. Main Ave

Rugby ND 58368

Phone: (701) 776-5998

E-Mail: trisms@gondtc.com

Region 3

Cavalier County Senior Meals & Services

Beatrice Delvo

211 8th Ave

Langdon ND 58249-2637

Phone: (701) 256-2828

Fargo Senior Commission, Inc.

Southeast Senior Services (Wahpeton)

Region 6

Central Valley Health Unit (Jamestown)

Dickey County Senior Citizens

James River Community Center & Senior Services

South Central Adult Services, Inc. (Valley City)

<http://www.scasc.net>

Region 7

Burleigh County Senior Adults Program

Kidder Emmons Senior Services

Mandan Golden Age Services

Mercer/Mclean Counties Commission on Aging

West River Transit (Bismarck)

Region 8

Elder Care-Dickenson

Southwest Transportation

Southwestern District Health Unit

Statewide Projects

Legal Services of ND

Senior Companion-LSS/ND

- E-Mail: beatrice@utma.com
- Nutrition United Inc./RCSMS
 - Larry Leonard, Jr.
 - P.O. Box 274
 - 119 6th Ave NE
 - Rolla ND 58367-0274
 - Phone: (701) 477-6421
 - E-Mail: nutusms@utma.com

- Benson County Transportation
 - Norma Jean Neumiller
 - P.O. Box 369
 - Maddock ND 58348-0369
 - Phone: (701) 438-2550
 - E-Mail: njneum@gondtc.com

- Senior Meals & Services
 - Bill Keith
 - 202 4th Ave NE
 - Devils Lake ND 58301
 - Phone: (701) 662-5061
 - E-Mail: sms@gondtc.com

- North Central Planning Council
 - Jacqueline R. Senger
 - P.O. Box 651
 - Devils Lake ND 58301
 - Phone: (701) 662-8131
 - E-Mail: jacquencpc@stellarnet.com

Region 4

- Walsh County Nutrition & Transportation Program
 - Pam Landsem
 - P.O. Box 620
 - Park River ND 58270
 - Phone: (701) 284-7999
 - E-Mail: pl1@polarcomm.com

- Pembina County Meals & Transportation
 - Sally Kliniske
 - P.O. Box 9
 - Drayton ND 58225
 - Phone: (701) 454-6586
 - E-Mail: pcmt@polarcomm.com

- Greater Grand Forks Senior Citizens Association, Inc.
 - Colette Iseminger-Executive Director
 - 620 4th Ave S
 - Grand Forks ND 58201-4534
 - Phone: (701) 772-7245
 - E-Mail: director.gfsc@midconetwork.com

Region 5

- Fargo Senior Commission, Inc.
 - Brian Arett
 - 701 Main Ave
 - P.O. Box 2217
 - Fargo ND 58108
 - Phone: (701) 293-1440
 - Fax: (701) 241-9639
 - E-Mail: barett@fsc.fargoparks.com
- Southwest Senior Services
 - Mary Nold
 - 520 3rd Ave S
 - Wahpeton ND 58075
 - Phone: (701) 642-3033 or (701) 642 5746
 - E-Mail: minold@702com.net

Region 6

- Dickey County Senior Citizens
 - Cheryl Jongerius
 - P.O. Box 213
 - 67 1st Ave South
 - Ellendale ND 58436-0213
 - Phone: (701) 349-4513
 - E-Mail: dcsc213@yahoo.com
- James River Community Center & Senior Services
 - Laurie McGuire
 - 502 10th Ave SE
 - P.O. Box 1092
 - Jamestown ND 58401-1092
 - Phone: (701) 252-2882
 - Fax: (701) 252-2529
 - E-Mail: jrsc@csicable.net
- South Central Adult Services, Inc.
 - Pat Hanson
 - 139 2nd Ave SE
 - P.O. Box 298
 - Valley City ND 58702
 - Phone: (701) 845-4300
 - Toll Free: (800) 472-0031
 - Fax: (701) 845-4073
 - Website: www.scasc.net
 - E-Mail: Pat@scasc.net
- Central Valley Health Unit
 - Marcia Bollingberg Unit Administrator
 - 310 10th St SE
 - P.O. Box 880
 - Jamestown ND 58402-0880
 - Phone: (701) 252-8130

☐ Fax: (701) 252-8137

☐ E-Mail: mbollingberg@nd.gov

☐ Region 7

☐ West River Transit

☐ Carol Anderson

☐ 3750 East Rosser Ave

☐ Bismarck ND 58501

☐ Phone: (701) 224-1876

☐ E-Mail:

westriver.bisman@midconetwork.com

☐ Mandan Golden Age Services

☐ Charles Bosch

☐ 301 NW 15th St

☐ P.O. Box 267

☐ Mandan ND 58554-0267

☐ Phone: (701) 663-6528

☐ E-Mail:

chuck.mgas@midconetwork.com

☐ Burleigh County Senior Adults Program

☐ Ellen Owen

☐ 315 N 20th St

☐ Bismarck ND 58502-1893

☐ Phone: (701) 255-4648

☐ E-Mail: bcsap@btinet.net

☐ Kidder Emmons Senior Services

☐ Pat Randall

☐ 201 1st Ave NW

☐ Steele ND 58482

☐ Phone: (701) 475-2708

☐ E-Mail: kess@bektel.com

☐ Mercer/McLean Counties Commission on Aging

☐ Shirley Schlafman

☐ 20 7th St N

☐ Hazen ND 58545

☐ Phone: (701) 748-5165 or 748-2493

☐ E-Mail: mmccoadirector@westriv.cc

☐ Region 8

☐ Eldercare

☐ Midge Kuntz

☐ P.O. Box 629

☐ Dickinson ND 58602

☐ Phone: (701) 456-1818

☐ Fax: (701) 456-1820

☐ E-Mail: eldercare@ndsupernet.com

☐ Southwestern District Health Unit

☐ Carlotta Ehlis

☐ 2869 3rd Ave w

- Dickinson ND 58602
- Phone: (701) 483-0171
- Fax: (701) 483-4097
- E-Mail: cehlis@state.nd.us

Southwest Transportation

- Donna M. Schaff
- 206 10th Ave NW
- Bowman ND 58623
- Phone: (701) 523-3241
- E-Mail: swtrans@pop.ctctel.com

Statewide Projects

Legal Services of ND

- Jim Fitzsimmons
- P.O. Box 1893
- Bismarck ND 58502-1893
- Phone: (701) 222-2110
- Fax: (701) 258-0043
- E-Mail: lsndadmin@legalassist.org

Senior Companion-LSS/ND

- Becky Telin
- 615 S Broadway, Suite L3
- Minot ND 58701
- Phone: (701) 838-7800
- Fax: (701) 838-2045
- E-Mail: btelin@lssnd.org

Send mail to putertech@ruggedwest.com with questions or comments about this web site.
Last modified: 09/28/06

STATISTICS FOR ALL PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

July 1, 2005 - June 30, 2006		OPERATING FUNDS					
PROVIDER	STATE AID	FED 5311	FEDERAL	FEDERAL	CITY-CO-ST.		
	CAPITAL	STATE AID	RURAL	044, III B	5307	MILL LEVY	OTHER
1 Dickey County Trans	0	21,720	13,164	0	0	0	0
2 Dunn County Trans.	0	15,152	0	0	0	0	919
3 Elder Care/Stark County	0	55,470	66,184	0	0	30,806	95,608
4 Emmons Co. Trans	0	14,813	15,881	0	0	0	0
5 Fargo Senior Commission (7 providers):							
5a. Fargo/West Fargo	0	127,684	6,930	75,000	0	0	3,496
5b. Cass County	0	16,913	10,641	0	0	0	4,828
5c. Ransom County	0	18,061	11,363	0	0	0	3,522
5d. Richland County	0	16,526	10,397	0	0	0	1,936
5e. Sargent County	0	16,104	10,132	0	0	0	3,599
5f. Steele/GF Counties	0	16,572	10,426	0	0	0	1,844
5g. Traill County	0	24,842	14,993	0	0	0	5,808
6 Glenn Ullin Trans.							
7 Golden Valley Trans.	0	17,147	13,103	0	0	22,587	0
8 Handiwheels-Fargo	0	14,985	0	0	0	0	49,835
9 Hazen, City of	0	17,913	0	0	0	12,296	3,085
10 James River Transit	0	100,088	96,766	0	0	55,349	8,667
11 Kenmare Wheels/Mis	0	11,248	7,318	0	0	0	637
12 Kidder-Emmons Co.	0	18,870	15,883	11,100	0	860	0
13 Minot Comm/Aging	0	62,884	51,444	0	0	53,129	63,094
14 Nelson Co. Trans.	0	21,202	23,219	0	0	6,500	2,666
15 North Central Planning - Devils Lake (11 providers):							
15a. Benson County	0	15,788	5,947	15,020	0	1,290	0
15b. Cando Seniors	0	19,168	7,790	0	0	0	47
15c. Cavalier County	0	23,906	7,464	0	0	5,200	0
15d. Eddy County	0	18,880	2,699	0	0	0	0
15e. Nutr/Sup-Belcourt	0	16,172	5,232	5,421	0	0	0
15f. Nutr United-Rolla	0	29,160	6,564	13,548	0	0	824
15g. Royal -Belcourt	0	0	16,122	0	0	0	8,792
15h. Sr Meals/Srvs-DL	0	35,336	15,330	0	0	6,311	15,081
15i. Spirit Lake Srvs	0	12,800	7,115	7,119	0	0	6,886
16 Pembina County	185	32,817	13,549	0	0	0	893
17 Sitting Bull College	0	21,999	33,277	0	0	0	33,277
18 Souris Basin Trans	14,922	133,046	101,507	67,000	0	0	16,045
19 South Central Trans.	0	142,708	42,829	0	0	27,500	49,685
20 Southwest Trans	0	71,376	27,738	0	0	12,500	0
21 Three Affiliated Tribes							
22 Tioga Seniors	0	6,785	0	0	0	900	1,266
23 Trenton Indian Srvs.							
24 Walsh Co Trans	0	42,219	26,107	0	0	1,888	142
25 West River Trans	0	100,623	32,282	58,000	0	39,045	30,010
26 Wildrose Seniors Trans	0	4,365	0	0	0	0	701
27 Williston Council Aging	0	37,298	26,460	21,000	0	0	270
SUB TOTAL - GROUP	\$15,107	\$1,372,640	\$755,856	\$273,208	\$0	\$276,161	\$413,463
28 Jamestown Taxi	0	6,100	11,152	0	0	0	0
15j. Lake Region Taxi-NorthCentral		17,725	17,924	0	0	0	0
15k. Minnewauken Cab-NorthCentral		6,100	10,909	0	0	0	0
29 Mercy-Williston Taxi	0	15,500	15,500	0	0	0	324
FIXED ROUTE and/or FED SECTION 5307							
30 Bis-Man Transit	0	134,451	0	0	949,853	370,551	137,005
31 Fargo, City of	0	222,048	0	0	1,309,851	623,945	0
32 Grand Forks, City of	0	115,817	0	0	624,090	553,595	0
33 Minot, City of	0	58,232	137,786	0	0	176,268	18,543
GRAND TOTALS	\$15,107	\$1,948,613	\$949,127	\$273,208	\$2,883,794	\$2,000,520	\$569,335

Submitted by Ken Tupa

STATS FOR ALL PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

July 1, 2005-June 30, 2006		REPORTED	REPORTED	**Costs Per Based on Total Expense					
PROVIDER	FARES	TOTAL INCOME	TOTAL EXPENSE	MILES	RIDES	VEHI- CLÉS	**COST/ MILE	**COST/ RIDE	**COST/ VEHICLE
Dickey County	2,663	\$37,547	\$37,547	16,324	4,686	1	\$2.30	\$8.01	\$37,547
Junn County	1,156	\$17,227	\$16,931	6,832	582	1	\$2.48	\$30.13	\$16,931
Elder Care	29,527	\$277,595	\$277,595	114,553	43,298	6	\$2.42	\$6.41	\$46,266
Emmons Co	7,285	\$37,979	\$59,433	22,315	2,969	2	\$2.66	\$20.02	\$29,717
Fargo Senior Commission:									
Fargo Senior	53,746	\$266,856	\$266,856	149,231	43,559	8	\$1.79	\$8.13	\$33,357
Cass County	2,689	\$35,071	\$35,071	23,000	1,913	1	\$1.52	\$18.33	\$35,071
Ransom Co	4,504	\$37,450	\$37,450	23,243	2,302	2	\$1.61	\$16.27	\$18,725
Richland Co	5,408	\$34,267	\$34,267	25,351	6,568	5	\$1.35	\$5.22	\$6,853
Sargent Co	3,558	\$33,393	\$33,393	25,942	782	2	\$1.29	\$42.70	\$16,697
Steele/GF Co	5,520	\$34,362	\$34,362	29,303	1,895	1	\$1.17	\$18.13	\$34,362
Trall Co	3,772	\$49,415	\$49,415	38,375	1,975	2	\$1.29	\$25.02	\$24,708
Glenn Ullin		\$0					#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
Golden Valley	3,550	\$56,387	\$46,647	44,274	903	2	\$1.05	\$51.66	\$23,324
Handiwheels	93,575	\$158,395	\$142,695	77,320	17,981	6	\$1.85	\$7.94	\$23,783
Hazen, City of	12,202	\$45,496	\$40,890	20,468	11,722	2	\$2.00	\$3.49	\$20,445
James River	145,639	\$406,509	\$406,509	168,760	61,077	11	\$2.41	\$6.66	\$36,955
Kenmare Whls	1,214	\$20,417	\$21,517	3,270	5,219	1	\$6.58	\$4.12	\$21,517
Kidder	5,055	\$51,768	\$51,768	48,338	9,439	2	\$1.07	\$5.48	\$25,884
Minot Comm	64,723	\$295,274	\$295,274	147,815	46,213	5	\$2.00	\$6.39	\$59,055
Nelson Co.	3,552	\$57,139	\$55,216	26,456	3,812	2	\$2.09	\$14.48	\$27,608
North Central-Devils Lake:									
Benson Co	7,186	\$45,231	\$45,231	24,535	7,295	4	\$1.84	\$6.20	\$11,308
Cando	5,897	\$32,902	\$32,440	6,076	4,040	2	\$5.34	\$8.03	\$16,220
Cavalier Co	6,087	\$42,657	\$43,803	15,504	6,862	2	\$2.83	\$6.38	\$21,902
Eddy Co	2,485	\$24,064	\$24,558	4,009	2,746	1	\$6.13	\$8.94	\$24,558
Nut/Belcourt	403	\$27,228	\$32,729	39,938	8,081	3	\$0.82	\$4.05	\$10,910
Nutrition Un	1,607	\$51,703	\$60,887	22,367	4,710	4	\$2.72	\$12.93	\$15,222
RoyalBelcourt	0	\$24,914	\$41,051	13,471	874	3	\$3.05	\$46.97	\$13,684
SeniorMis-DL	15,790	\$87,848	\$89,051	36,674	17,372	4	\$2.43	\$5.13	\$22,263
Spirit Lake	0	\$33,920	\$71,064	48,497	11,268	6	\$1.47	\$6.31	\$11,844
Pembina Co	3,621	\$50,880	\$50,880	24,823	2,768	2	\$2.05	\$18.38	\$25,440
Sitting Bull	19,688	\$108,241	\$108,654	114,785	6,680	6	\$0.95	\$16.27	\$18,109
Souris Basin	26,661	\$344,259	\$344,259	138,162	37,170	11	\$2.49	\$9.26	\$31,296
South Central	38,512	\$301,234	\$301,234	216,590	42,947	14	\$1.39	\$7.01	\$21,517
Southwest	9,130	\$120,744	\$106,874	58,069	28,598	5	\$1.84	\$3.74	\$21,375
Three Af Tribes		\$0					#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
Tioga	2,980	\$11,931	\$11,931	7,510	2,058	2	\$1.59	\$5.80	\$5,966
Trenton		\$0	\$0				#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
Walsh Co	10,497	\$80,853	\$80,853	42,975	7,256	2	\$1.88	\$11.14	\$40,427
West River	33,100	\$293,060	\$338,191	103,185	34,295	15	\$3.28	\$9.86	\$22,546
Wildrose	0	\$5,066	\$5,348	3,502	444	1	\$1.53	\$12.05	\$5,348
Williston	11,134	\$96,162	\$91,723	27,318	14,110	7	\$3.36	\$6.50	\$13,103
SUB TOTAL	\$644,116	\$3,735,444	\$3,823,597	1,959,160	506,449	156	\$1.95	\$7.55	\$24,510
JamestwnTaxi	54,883	\$72,135	\$88,072	65,573	12,731	2	\$1.34	\$6.92	\$44,036
LR - Taxi	0	\$35,649	\$45,246				#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
MinnewknCab	5,431	\$22,440	\$22,440	6,941	4,852	2	\$3.23	\$4.62	\$11,220
Williston Taxi	7,852	\$39,176	\$38,855	10,103	6,700	3	\$3.85	\$5.80	\$12,952
Bis-Man Transit	413,882	\$2,005,742	\$2,153,686	1,023,991	281,210	33	\$2.10	\$7.66	\$65,263
Fargo, City of	515,267	\$2,671,111	\$2,671,111	754,644	1,178,285	27	\$3.54	\$2.27	\$98,930
Grand Forks	214,471	\$1,507,973	\$1,462,652	589,000	270,000	32	\$2.48	\$5.42	\$45,708
Minot, City of	61,670	\$452,499	\$501,151	201,836	147,132	17	\$2.48	\$3.41	\$29,479
TOTALS	\$1,917,572	\$10,542,169	\$10,806,810	4,611,248	2,407,359	272	\$2.34	\$4.49	\$39,731

STATS FOR ALL PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

July 1, 2005 - June 30, 2006

PROVIDER	FARE/MILE	FARE/RIDE	FARE/VEH	MILES/VEH	RIDES/VEH	FARES %/ EXPENSE
Dickey County Trans	\$0.163	\$0.566	\$2.663	16,324	4,686	7.09%
Hann County Trans.	\$0.169	\$2.057	\$1,156	6,932	562	6.83%
Rider Care	\$0.258	\$0.682	\$4.921	19,092	7,216	10.64%
Emmons Co. Trans	\$0.326	\$2.454	\$3,643	11,158	1,485	12.26%
Fargo Senior Commission:						
Fargo Senior Comm	\$0.360	\$1.234	\$6,718	18,654	5,445	20.14%
Cass County	\$0.117	\$1.406	\$2,689	23,000	1,913	7.67%
Ransom County	\$0.194	\$1.957	\$2,252	11,622	1,151	12.03%
Richland County	\$0.213	\$0.823	\$1,082	5,070	1,314	15.78%
Sargent County	\$0.137	\$4.550	\$1,779	12,971	391	10.65%
Steele/GF Counties	\$0.188	\$2.913	\$5,520	29,303	1,895	16.06%
Traill County	\$0.098	\$1.910	\$1,886	19,188	988	7.63%
Glenn Ullin Trans.	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
Golden Valley Trans.	\$0.080	\$3.931	\$1,775	22,137	452	7.61%
Handiwheels-Fargo	\$1.210	\$5.204	\$15,596	12,867	2,997	65.58%
Hazen, City of	\$0.596	\$1.041	\$6,101	10,234	5,861	29.84%
James River Transit	\$0.863	\$2.385	\$13,240	15,342	5,552	35.83%
Kenmare Wheels/MIs	\$0.371	\$0.233	\$1,214	3,270	5,219	5.64%
Kidder-Emmons Co.	\$0.105	\$0.536	\$2,528	24,169	4,720	9.76%
Minot Comm/Aging	\$0.438	\$1.401	\$12,945	29,563	9,243	21.92%
Nelson Co. Trans.	\$0.134	\$0.932	\$1,776	13,228	1,906	6.43%
North Central-Devils Lake:						
Benson County	\$0.293	\$0.985	\$1,797	6,134	1,824	15.89%
Cando	\$0.971	\$1.460	\$2,949	3,036	2,020	18.18%
Cavalier County	\$0.393	\$0.887	\$3,044	7,752	3,431	13.90%
Eddy County	\$0.620	\$0.905	\$2,485	4,009	2,746	10.12%
Nutr/Support-Belcourt	\$0.010	\$0.050	\$134	13,313	2,694	1.23%
Nutrition United-Rolla	\$0.072	\$0.341	\$402	5,592	1,178	2.64%
Royal Coach-Belsourt	\$0.000	\$0.000	\$0	4,490	291	0.00%
Senior Meals/Srvs-DL	\$0.431	\$0.909	\$3,948	9,169	4,343	17.73%
Spirit Lake Nation Tribe	\$0.000	\$0.000	\$0	8,083	1,878	0.00%
Pembina County	\$0.146	\$1.308	\$1,811	12,412	1,384	7.12%
Sitting Bull College	\$0.172	\$2.947	\$3,281	19,131	1,113	18.12%
Souris Basin Trans	\$0.193	\$0.717	\$2,424	12,560	3,379	7.74%
South Central Trans.	\$0.178	\$0.897	\$2,751	15,471	3,068	12.78%
Southwest Trans	\$0.157	\$0.319	\$1,826	11,614	5,720	8.54%
Three Affiliated Tribes	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
Tioga Seniors	\$0.397	\$1.448	\$1,490	3,755	1,029	24.98%
Trenton Indian Srvs.	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
Walsh Co Trans	\$0.244	\$1.447	\$5,249	21,488	3,628	12.98%
West River Trans	\$0.321	\$0.965	\$2,207	6,879	2,286	9.79%
Wildrose Seniors Trans	\$0.000	\$0.000	\$0	3,502	444	0.00%
Williston Council Aging	\$0.408	\$0.789	\$1,591	3,903	2,016	12.14%
TOTAL FOR GROUP	\$0.329	\$1.272	\$4,129	12,559	3,246	16.85%
Jamestown Taxi	\$0.837	\$4.311	\$27,442	32,787	6,366	62.32%
Lake Region Taxi-DL	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	0.00%
Minnewauken Cab	\$0.782	\$1.119	\$2,716	3,471	2,426	24.20%
Mercy-Williston Taxi	\$0.777	\$1.172	\$2,617	3,368	2,233	20.21%
Bis-Man Transit	\$0.404	\$1.491	\$12,542	31,030	8,522	19.22%
Fargo, City of	\$0.683	\$0.471	\$19,084	27,950	43,640	19.29%
Grand Forks, City of	\$0.364	\$0.588	\$6,702	18,406	8,438	14.66%
Minot, City of	\$0.306	\$0.343	\$3,628	11,873	8,655	12.31%
GRAND TOTALS	\$0.416	\$0.797	\$7,050	16,953	8,851	17.74%

Mike Williams - Fargo City Commission

The Federal Transit Administration has been providing increased funding for public transportation for both urban and rural areas. In 2006, the three urban areas of Fargo-West Fargo, Bismarck-Mandan, and Grand Forks received a total of over \$3.2 million in federal funding. Rural areas received over \$3 million. In addition, over \$2 million was provided to urban and rural transit providers for capital grants. The federal funds can be used for both capital costs and operating shortfalls, but require state or local matching funds. Federal funds will pay for 80% of capital costs and 50% of operating costs. Non-federal matching funds must come from state or local funds. Fares paid by riders are considered program income and cannot be used to match federal grants.

Bus ridership in Fargo is growing, both on the fixed route bus system and on the paratransit system that provides rides for persons with disabilities. Our 5-year transit plan projects continued growth in paratransit rides, a need for increased frequency on two bus routes, a need for an additional route to the expanding southwest portion of Fargo, and a need for demand response service to provide rides to areas of the city that are not on the existing bus routes.

The specific needs are outlined below:

- Growing Paratransit Needs – Cities with fixed route bus service are required to provide paratransit service. It is estimated that Fargo will need an additional \$100,000 a year to meet the growing needs of this service.
- Increase for Route 15 – Route 15 provides service along 13th Avenue South between the West Acres area and the downtown area on a 60 minute

frequency. Ridership has grown to over 115,000 passengers a year, and a proposed route change will likely increase it more. At peak times, the bus is very crowded. This route needs a second bus which will provide the 30 minute frequency desired by many transit riders. Increasing the frequency to 30 minutes is expected to attract even more transit riders. The estimated cost of providing this added service Monday through Saturday is \$183,000 a year.

- Add a new Southwest Fargo Route – Many neighborhoods in southwest Fargo are not served by fixed route transit. An additional route is needed to serve these neighborhoods. This new route would operate through south and southwest Fargo and provide a connection to the West Acres shopping center and a transit transfer point at K-mart on South University Drive. The estimated cost of the new route is \$153,000 a year.
- Increase for Route 16 – Route 16 provides service along 17th Avenue South between the West Acres shopping center and the downtown area on a 60 minute frequency. Important destinations served include Dakota Clinic, MeritCare Hospital, and Fargo South High School. Ridership has grown to 100,000 passengers a year and at peak times, the bus is crowded. Like Route 15, this route needs a second bus which will provide the 30 minute frequency desired by many transit riders. Increasing the frequency to 30 minutes is expected to attract even more transit riders. The estimated cost of this additional service is \$153,000 a year.

- Add a new 25th Street Route – The transit plan identified a need for a new route that would provide north/south service on 25th Street. It would provide service into the downtown area or to NDSU on the north and extend south to 32nd Avenue South. This would provide additional service to south Fargo and provide important destinations such as Southeast Human Services Center, two grocery stores, and two MeritCare clinics. The estimated cost of this new route is \$153,000 a year.
- Demand Response Service – There are areas in Fargo that need public transportation service but do not have enough riders to justify fixed route bus service. These include the industrial park and new low income and elderly housing developments in south Fargo. It is estimated that the cost of starting demand response service for these areas will be \$167,000 a year.

The total cost of these recommendations is \$900,000 a year. The City of Fargo has access to additional federal funds to implement some of these changes, but the City does not have the local/state match money for the federal funds. Fargo has left unspent \$150,000 to \$200,000 each year for the past 3 years totaling a balance of \$500,000.

The \$3 increase would allow Fargo to match the federal grants and implement two of the four needed routes. The only other source of local match money is property taxes. Fargo already provides \$500,000 to \$600,000 a year from city property tax revenue and the City Commission has been reluctant to increase property taxes.

The following is a summary of the transit system. The City of Fargo operates 9 fixed route buses on weekdays and 7 fixed route buses on Saturdays. On days that NDSU is in session, an additional 3 fixed route buses provide service focused on needs of the University. Since 1999, ridership on the fixed route bus system has increased from 429,000 rides to 900,000 rides in 2006. Paratransit ridership has also increased from 23,000 in 2000 to 36,000 in 2006. As paratransit rides have grown, the cost of operating the system has grown by 50% from \$300,000 a year in 2000 to about \$500,000 in 2006.

The budget for the Fargo/West Fargo bus system is \$3.1 million a year. Funding is from the following sources:

- Federal Transit Administration \$1,500,000
- State of North Dakota \$190,000
- Fares and other Revenue \$475,000
- City of Fargo and West Fargo \$785,000
- North Dakota State University \$125,000

The City of Fargo strongly supports the increased state funding for the transit system operated by the City. In addition, the increases for the Fargo Senior Commission and Handi-Wheels are also important as they provide complimentary demand response bus service to residents with special needs or those who need a ride to a location not served by the fixed route bus system.

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Testimony Presented on Senate Bill 2314 to the

Senate Appropriations Committee
Senator Ray Holmberg, Chair

by Jim Gilmour, Director of Planning and Development
City of Fargo

February 13, 2007

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

The City of Fargo respectfully requests a "Do Pass" recommendation for Senate Bill 2314. Public transportation is an essential public service to both urban and rural areas. It enables people to live independently in their homes longer thus decreasing the need for costly nursing homes or limited care facilities. Transit provides a way to get to work, shop, and reach medical services for working people who do not have a car.

The Federal Transit Administration has been providing increased funding for public transportation for both urban and rural areas. In 2006, the three urban areas of Fargo-West Fargo, Bismarck-Mandan, and Grand Forks received a total of over \$3.2 million in federal funding. Rural areas received over \$3 million. In addition, over \$2 million was provided to urban and rural transit providers for capital grants.

The federal funds can be used for both capital costs and operating shortfalls, but require state or local matching funds. Federal funds will pay for 80% of capital costs and 50% of operating costs. Non-federal matching funds must come from

state or local funds. Fares paid by riders are considered program income and cannot be used to match federal grants.

Bus ridership in Fargo is growing, both on the fixed route bus system and on the paratransit system that provides rides for persons with disabilities. Our 5-year transit plan projects continued growth in paratransit rides, a need for increased frequency on two bus routes, a need for an additional route to the expanding southwest portion of Fargo, and a need for demand response service to provide rides to areas of the city that are not on the existing bus routes.

The cost of these recommendations is \$900,000 a year. The City of Fargo has access to additional federal funds to implement some of these changes, but the City does not have the local/state match money for the federal funds. Fargo has left unspent \$150,000 to \$200,000 each year for the past 3 years. This balance of unused federal funds is now \$500,000.

The \$3 increase would allow Fargo to match the federal grants and implement two of the four needed routes. The only other source of local match money is property taxes. Fargo already provides \$500,000 to \$600,000 a year from city property tax revenue and the City Commission has been reluctant to increase property taxes.

In summary, the City of Fargo priority public transportation expansion needs are \$909,000 a year. The proposed increase would provide Fargo with an additional

\$190,000 to match federal funds, and allow the City of Fargo to implement roughly half of the service that is needed.

The City of Fargo strongly supports the increased state funding for the transit system operated by the City. In addition, the increases for the Fargo Senior Commission and Handi-Wheels are also important as they provide complimentary demand response bus service to residents with special needs or those who need a ride to a location not served by the fixed route bus system.

Testimony Before The
Senate Appropriations Committee
February 13th, 2007

Same submitted
by Brian Arveta
3-1-07
House
Transportation

4

Chairman Holmberg and members of the appropriations Committee, my name is Paul Grindeland, I am the Director of Transportation at Fargo Senior Services. Our agency provides senior citizen and general public transportation services for the Fargo/West Fargo metro area and seven counties in southeastern North Dakota. I am here to speak in support of the State Aid for Public Transit funding included in Senate Bill 2314.

- The continuing need to expand service: Even after the funding increases in 2005 we still have unmet transit needs in our urban and rural areas. This need can be partially explained by the population projections in our region – in 1990 our region had 30,962 persons 60 years and over; it is projected that by 2010 this population will grow to 44,042. More telling will be the growth of the 80+ year old population: 6,597 in 1990 and projected to be 11,361 by 2010 (North Dakota State Data Center). In the Fargo/West Fargo metro area, where our service compliments the City of Fargo Metropolitan Area Transit city bus system, any increased funding we receive will be used to add another vehicle to serve a growing senior population. In rural areas, where our agency potentially serves a 7,931 square mile area we forecast an increased number of medical trips to the major medical facilities in our region as our population ages. Providing transit services in the rural areas is expensive; currently our average cost for a one way trip in our region is \$18.81.

- Need for local match of Federal Funds: State Aid for Public Transit funding has helped our agency, and many others across the state, utilize Section 5311 federal funding which is allocated on a 50/50 match basis. In the next biennium, it is estimated that federal funding for transit will increase from 8 million to 12.7 million.
- Transit Coordination projects: At the present time our agency is working with other transit providers in our area to coordinate and expand transportation options for senior citizens and the general public. We expect the need to create new service will come from these negotiations.
- Drivers Wages and Recruitment: Currently our agency is having a more difficult time recruiting and retaining quality drivers due to an increasing demand for higher wages; currently our Fargo van drivers start at \$7.00 per hour. We will use the increase in funding to immediately increase our drivers wages by at least 10%.

State Aid for Public Transit funding has allowed our transportation service to help those most in need whether that is someone from a remote rural area needing a ride for medical treatment, or in the urban area where we compliment the existing bus system by providing a more cost effective ride to those senior individuals who cannot use fixed route or paratransit services.

In closing I compliment the Department of Transportation and its staff for its handling of this Public Transportation Fund and thank them for their assistance over the years with our transit program. Thank you for your time. I would be happy to answer any questions.

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PUBLIC TESTIMONY SB 2314
SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
SENATOR RAY HOLMBERG, SHAIRMAN
FEBRUARY 13, 2007

CHAIRMAN HOLMBERG, MEMBERS OF THE SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE, MY NAME IS ROBIN WERRE AND I AM THE DIRECTOR OF BIS-MAN TRANSIT BOARD HERE IN BISMARCK. I AM HERE TO TESTIFY IN SUPPORT OF SB2314.

BIS-MAN TRANSIT IS A PUBLIC TRANSIT SYSTEM, WHICH OPERATES A DOOR TO DOOR PARA TRANSIT SYSTEM FOR ELDERLY, 60 YEARS OF AGE OR OLDER AND/OR DISABLED INDIVIDUALS. WE OPERATE A 24-HOUR A DAY, SEVEN DAYS PER WEEK BASIS. CURRENTLY WE HAVE 8900 CERTIFIED RIDERS AND DURING 2006 WE GAVE 190,194 RIDES. TO PROVIDE THESE RIDES WE DROVE 994,414 MILES.

WE ALSO OPERATE CAPITAL AREA TRANSIT, BETTER KNOWN AS THE CAT. THIS IS A PUBLIC SERVICE AND OPERATES ON A FIXED ROUTE. WE CURRENTLY HAVE ELEVEN ROUTES AND PROVIDED 104,717 RIDES DURING 2006. WE ALSO DROVE 290,376 MILES.

DUE TO THE INCREASED PRICE OF GAS, DURING 2006 WE HAVE PAID A FUEL SURCHARGE OF \$169,640 ABOVE OUR CONTRACT AGREEMENT AMOUNT. MONEY THAT ORGINALLY WOULD HAVE BEEN USED AS MATCH.

DURING 2006 WE HAD A 2.3 MILLION DOLLAR BUDGET OF WHICH \$967,728 WAS FEDERAL FUNDS, \$875,448 LOCAL FUNDS OF WHICH \$493,302 IS PROVIDED BY THE CITIES OF BISMARCK AND MANDAN, AND \$490,250 FAREBOX. IT TAKES ALMOST ALL OF OUR FUNDING TO PROVIDE JUST CURRENT OPERATING COSTS.

WE CURRENTLY HAVE \$1,961,422 FEDERAL FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR CAPITAL, IF WE CAN PROVIDE THE LOCAL MATCH, WHICH WOULD BE \$566,134. STATE FUNDS ARE CONSIDERED LOCAL MATCH. IT IS ALSO VERY DIFFICULT TO CONTINUE PROVIDING A PUBLIC TRANSIT SYSTEM WITHOUT VEHICLES AND MAINTENANCE OF THOSE VEHICLES AND FACILITIES.

WITH THE INCREASE OF STATE DOLLARS FROM THE \$3 DOLLAR INCREASE IN VEHICLE REGISTRATION IT WOULD PROVIDE APPROXIMATELY \$188,000 PER YEAR FOR BIS-MAN TRANSIT TO USE AS MATCH. OVER A THREE YEAR PERIOD THIS WOULD BE AROUND \$564,000.

AS YOU CAN SEE THE STATE FUNDING IS VERY IMPORTANT TO MAINTAIN A TRANSIT SYSTEM LIKE BIS-MAN TRANSIT AND ALL OTHER PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION IN NORTH DAKOTA.

ALTHOUGH \$3.00 MAY SEEM LIKE A LOT, LOOK AT THE COMPARISONS. WE BUY A CAN OF POP FOR \$1.50, A CUP OF COFFEE FOR \$1.50 OR A LOTTAE FOR \$4.50 SEVERAL TIMES OF DAY AND THINK NOTHING OF IT. WE ARE ASKING FOR A \$3.00 INCREASE PAID ONCE A YEAR WHICH MAY KEEP OUR ELDERLY AND DISABLED IN THEIR OWN HOMES AND ALLOW US TO RECEIVE THE FEDERAL DOLLARS AVAILABLE TO NORTH DAKOTA IF WE CAN MATCH THEM.

BECAUSE OF THIS NEED I ASK THAT YOU SUPPORT SB2314.

THANK YOU

2-13-2007

Chairman Holmberg and members of the senate appropriations committee.
My name is Darrell Francis, Director for Souris Basin Transportation, a non-profit, in Minot. I appear before you this morning asking for your favorable consideration of Senate Bill 2314.

Our system operates in the 8 county area of North Central portion of the state. Our main office and shop is located in Minot, with our 11 vehicles operate in the surrounding counties: Bottineau, Burke, Divide, McHenry, Mountrail, Pierce, Renville, and Ward covering over 12,000 square miles, since 1980.

Of the approximately 36,000 passengers, 70 % of them are over 60 and / or disabled. The present budget through the Federal 5311 grant is approximately \$529,000. The cash match is \$196,500 on the 50/50 match and \$73,750 on the 80/20 match, for a total of \$270,250. The present State Aid allocation is \$168,000. This produces a shortfall of nearly \$102,250 that we must find funding sources throughout the present fiscal year. If we are unable to produce the extra funds, we will not be able to use Federal funds.

Any future additional funding by the Federal Government under the SAFETEA-LU, would add to our cash match shortfall for federal funds, limiting us to what we can afford, taking into consideration any new routes or extended hour costs. The additional State Aid would give us the opportunity to replace the 11 year old buses through the capital funds of 5311 and at the same time address the additional costs we incur from health insurance, salary, fuel, parts and maintenance, to meet the rural transit needs.

Please vote in favor of SB 2314. Thank you for your time.

**Testimony
Senate Bill 2314
House Transportation Committee
March 1, 2007**

Chairman Weisz and members of the House Transportation Committee, my name is Carol Anderson, Director of West River Transit. I am here to testify in support of SB2314, the \$3 increase for State Aid for Public Transportation.

West River Transit provides 50,000 plus rural rides per year in a six county area, delivering individuals for all needs, from airport drop offs to medical service needs. The federal funds we would be able to tap into with this increase, would be \$62,463, which would help transport approximately 7800 additional rides. That is a great deal of rides in the rural areas.

The \$3 annual increase is not even comparable to today's everyday purchases, we spend over \$3 for a specialty coffee, \$7.50 for one movie ticket, \$3 for a student, \$5 per adult, to attend a high school sports activity, and \$10 for a pizza! Our agency along with our riders that have vehicles, will also be paying this increase, and would be happy to, considering what it will do for the community transit services of North Dakota.

We need your support for SB2314, this is the only transportation available for many of our rural clients.

Thank you for your time, and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY SB 2314
HOUSE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
REPRESENTATIVE ROBIN WEISZ, CHAIRMAN
MARCH 1, 2007

CHAIRMAN WEISZ, MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE, MY NAME IS ROBIN WERRE AND I AM THE DIRECTOR OF BIS-MAN TRANSIT BOARD HERE IN BISMARCK. I AM HERE TO TESTIFY IN SUPPORT OF SB2314.

BIS-MAN TRANSIT IS A PUBLIC TRANSIT SYSTEM, WHICH OPERATES A DOOR TO DOOR PARA TRANSIT SYSTEM FOR ELDERLY, 60 YEARS OF AGE OR OLDER AND/OR DISABLED INDIVIDUALS. WE OPERATE A 24-HOUR A DAY, SEVEN DAYS PER WEEK BASIS. CURRENTLY WE HAVE 8900 CERTIFIED RIDERS AND DURING 2006 WE GAVE 190,194 RIDES. TO PROVIDE THESE RIDES WE DROVE 994,414 MILES.

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DURING 2006 WE HAD A 2.3 MILLION DOLLAR BUDGET OF WHICH \$967,728 WAS FEDERAL FUNDS, \$875,448 LOCAL FUNDS OF WHICH \$493,302 IS PROVIDED BY THE CITIES OF BISMARCK AND MANDAN, AND \$490,250 FAREBOX. IT TAKES ALMOST ALL OF OUR FUNDING TO PROVIDE JUST CURRENT OPERATING COSTS.

WE CURRENTLY HAVE \$1,961,422 FEDERAL FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR CAPITAL, IF WE CAN PROVIDE THE LOCAL MATCH, WHICH WOULD BE \$566,134. STATE FUNDS ARE CONSIDERED LOCAL MATCH. IT IS ALSO VERY DIFFICULT TO CONTINUE PROVIDING A PUBLIC TRANSIT SYSTEM WITHOUT VEHICLES AND MAINTENANCE OF THOSE VEHICLES AND FACILITIES.

WITH THE INCREASE OF STATE DOLLARS FROM THE \$3 DOLLAR INCREASE IN VEHICLE REGISTRATION IT WOULD PROVIDE APPROXIMATELY \$188,000 PER YEAR FOR BIS-MAN TRANSIT TO USE AS MATCH. OVER A THREE YEAR PERIOD THIS WOULD BE AROUND \$564,000.

AS YOU CAN SEE THE STATE FUNDING IS VERY IMPORTANT TO MAINTAIN A TRANSIT SYSTEM LIKE BIS-MAN TRANSIT AND ALL OTHER PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION IN NORTH DAKOTA.

ALTHOUGH \$3.00 MAY SEEM LIKE A LOT, LOOK AT THE COMPARISONS. WE BUY A CAN OF POP FOR \$1.50, A CUP OF COFFEE FOR \$1.50 OR A LOTTAE FOR \$4.50 SEVERAL TIMES OF DAY AND THINK NOTHING OF IT. WE ARE ASKING FOR A \$3.00 INCREASE PAID ONCE A YEAR WHICH MAY KEEP OUR ELDERLY AND DISABLED IN THEIR OWN HOMES AND ALLOW US TO RECEIVE THE FEDERAL DOLLARS AVAILABLE TO NORTH DAKOTA IF WE CAN MATCH THEM. IF WE WOULD RAISE OUR FARES BY \$.50 A RIDE, INDIVIDUALS GOING TO WORK EVERY DAY WOULD COST THEM AROUND \$150.00 EXTRA PER YEAR. MOST OF THESE INDIVIDUALS ARE ON A FIXED INCOME AND CAN'T AFORD THIS RAISE. ALSO FARE INCOME IS NOT MATCHABLE.

BECAUSE OF THIS NEED I ASK THAT YOU SUPPORT SB2314.

THANK YOU

**PUBLIC TESTIMONY SB 2314
HOUSE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
HONORABLE ROBIN WEISZ, CHAIRMAN
MARCH 1, 2007 10:00 A.M.**

Good Morning Chairman Weisz and Members of the House Transportation Committee:

My name is Vickay Gross, program coordinator and advocate for the Protection and Advocacy for Beneficiaries of Social Security Program. I provide advocacy services state wide for beneficiaries of Social Security to address barriers to employment.

In recent years there has been greater emphasis upon assisting people with disabilities to return to work. Transportation has been identified as one of the major barriers to employment due to the lack of availability in some areas or inadequate service in others. A critical component of anyone's job is being to work on time and reliably. If transportation systems are at capacity or have limited service, delays occur which negatively impact work performance.

Another major issue related to transportation is the need for accessible buses. As people with more significant disabilities break into the workforce and become more involved in their communities they will be putting greater demands on the system. It is important that all citizens of our communities have access to reliable and accessible transportation so they can fully participate in employment and volunteer opportunities.

The demand on the current transportation systems demonstrates how eager people with disabilities are to become more independent and involved in their communities. Therefore, as their involvement grows so does the need for accessible and affordable transportation.

Thank you for your consideration.