

2015 HOUSE POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS

HCR 3028

2015 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Political Subdivisions Committee

Prairie Room, State Capitol

HCR 3028

2/19/2015

24143

☐ Subcommittee

☐ Conference Committee

Amanda Muscha

Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

Directing the Legislative Management to study the feasibility and desirability of the establishment of county or multi-county emergency response center outside urban centers that already maintain emergency response agencies with around-the-clock staffing.

Minutes:

Testimony 1 and 2

Chairman Klemin: Opened hearing on HCR 3028.

Representative Mooney: Testimony 1

Representative Beadle: Is anything stopping counties from doing this already?

Representative Mooney: No but it becomes challenging in the leadership ability. There are some counties who partner up on a regional basis but it takes somebody to own it and drive it forward.

Representative Beadle: Knowing that we have had emergency service restricting in some of the smaller population areas, it has also resulted in state radio taking over a lot of these emergency response areas for 911. Are you saying what state radio is insufficient right now?

Representative Mooney: The 911 is a great resource for all of our communities of ND. It works well and effective. The ability to dispatch out services is there already. The problem is about who is going to be there to go in the remote areas? It is partnering with the grand approach between communications and delivery.

Gerry Roach: Testimony 2

Representative Koppelman: Over the years there have been some cooperative movements among the responders. Has your fire department been a part of that? Do you do any regional planning?

Gerry Roach: There are any areas that come together but the problem is when you get the small areas that are bedroom communities and you don't get much during working hours.

They are 20-30 miles away working and not in the area. To pull people from their work and send them to training on weekends and nights taking them away from their families is difficult. These are volunteers and the hours keep going up. I am asking for help to enhance our volunteer system.

Representative Anderson: Can you describe what your volunteers look like?

Gerry Roach: There's no describing them. It could be anyone from our area starting at age 18.

Representative Anderson: My niece's school was the volunteer force in the town. It was the seniors in her class who were the main volunteers.

Gerry Roach: We have no school. That is one thing with this emergency response system, we have to start looking at this like our schools, and how they are consolidating and going together. We have to set up a structure like that.

Representative Zubke: I am trying to picture what you would envision after we do this study? When my town went through the growth we would have resisted the state coming in and setting something up, we struggled with what the city wanted to do, and what the county wanted to do. How would this study bring us to a point that this is what it might look like?

Gerry Roach: I hope that every county or area will have a building in the middle and it will have a fire department, sheriff, deputy, and first responder or ambulance system. I hope the state will fund the buildings. The counties come back through and will have to fund the operations. Through that, hopefully it works up to 2-4 full time people in each center that will be there for first response and get the training to bring it back to the volunteers in their home area.

Representative Zubke: There is nothing preventing that right now, is there? If you try to bring this from the top down it looks to me like something that should come from the bottom up, and so if a couple counties wanted to get together they could. There are grants you could apply for that would help with constructing of buildings.

Gerry Roach: I have started at the ground and have been working my way back up. Maybe we are living in a different area. I have the state and federal government putting stuff in my backyard. I go to get help to protect these people that are coming and going. Grand Sky is going to be 2-3 thousand jobs and it will put 4-6 thousand extra cars on our highways that our volunteers that will have to protect. They will have to run from work and leave whatever. We might be in a different situation but I have started with the local levels and this is where I am at now: looking for state and federal help on the whole deal.

Representative Becker: We lost a bill on the floor earlier this week because people said we couldn't legislate behavior. If the state were to go along with this and had the money to do what you would like to see done, where would the people come from? We have shortages in every area of jobs. How would we attract these people?

Gerry Roach: They are already there and willing to do something like this.

Representative Hatlestad: It would appear that the initial group would have to be full-time paid staff and the others could be volunteer?

Gerry Roach: That is my hope.

Terry Traynor: This has a great attraction for our commissioners. We struggle with this issue. Each is a separate political subdivision and most are put up by volunteers. There are grant funds for training but they are very small. The number of calls went up by 1000%. The study is well worth it. How can we better serve our people?

Greg Mills: We support this bill and it is an opportunity for the state to take initiative. What's important here is the study and what can come out of it. It may not be for everyone but it will help many.

Representative Koppelman: I understand the need. I remember what a complexity it was to bring people together and we have addressed some of those issues over the years. Where were we, where have we come, and where are we going in terms of that process? I know one of the issues was who responds. For a while it was very territorial but it has moved to be who can respond quickest. Can you give us an overview of where things are now?

Greg Mills: Who can get there the quickest provides the best results no matter what it is, but the reality is we have departments in sleeper communities where they may be one fire person who lives in the town. We may also have some that have aging departments I think there are a lot of paper tiger rosters out there. There are people in their 80's working in the fire departments and they may not be very effective anymore but I won't mess with that culture. There are situations in the western part of the state where the volunteers all work in the oil fields and for them to answer the call is not practical. There are many more issues and they do not get paid when they leave a job. I do know there is a culture with fire departments and it runs deep. These fire departments don't want to be mandated to do certain things because they want to salvage themselves and their identity, but we are at a point in time where it is not providing the best services to our citizens.

Representative Kelsh: Are there grants or help available?

Greg Mills: There are but they are minimal. We use to have more help for these kinds of things from the federal but not so much anymore. There isn't enough. I am not an advocate of the state paying the bill for this. I think there has to be a partnership and at some level I think there are ways to do this. To rely on outside money these days, it's there, but only in small amounts.

Representative Hatlestad: I assume over the years you have done planning for potential disasters. Would you have plans that could be used as the basis to start the study?

Greg Mills: Specifically I do not have plans that would address. I think there are models we can look at that can give us a start.

Chairman Klemin: Closed the hearing on HCR 3028

Chairman Klemin: Opened discussion on HCR 3028

Representative Kelsh: I move a do pass and placement on the consent calendar

Representative Klein: Second

A Roll Call Vote Was Taken: Yes 12, No 0, Absent 2 (Maragos and Strinden)

Motion carries

Representative Kelsh will carry the bill

Date: 2/19/2015
Roll Call Vote #: 1

**2015 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE
ROLL CALL VOTES
BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 3028**

House Political Subdivisions Committee

☐ Subcommittee ☐ Conference Committee

Amendment LC# or Description: _____

Recommendation: ☐ Adopt Amendment
☒ Do Pass ☐ Do Not Pass ☐ Without Committee Recommendation
☐ As Amended ☐ Rerefer to Appropriations

Other Actions: ☐ Reconsider ☒ consent calendar

Motion Made By Kelsh Seconded By Klein

Representative	Yes	No	Representative	Yes	No
Chairman Lawrence R. Klemin	X		Rep. Pamela Anderson	X	
Vice Chair Patrick R. Hatlestad	X		Rep. Jerry Kelsh	X	
Rep. Thomas Beadle	X		Rep. Kylie Oversen	X	
Rep. Rich S. Becker	X		Rep. Marie Strinden	/	
Rep. Matthew M. Klein	X				
Rep. Kim Koppelman	X				
Rep. William E. Kretschmar	X				
Rep. Andrew G. Maragos	/				
Rep. Nathan Toman	X				
Rep. Denton Zubke	X				

Total (Yes) 12 No 0

Absent 2 (maragos and strinden)

Floor Assignment Kelsh

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

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

HCR 3028: Political Subdivisions Committee (Rep. Klemin, Chairman) recommends **DO PASS** and **BE PLACED ON THE CONSENT CALENDAR** (12 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 2 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). HCR 3028 was placed on the Tenth order on the calendar.

2015 SENATE POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS

HCR 3028

2015 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Political Subdivisions Committee Red River Room, State Capitol

HCR 3028
4/2/2015
Job Number 25734

- ☐ Subcommittee
☐ Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature



Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

A concurrent resolution directing the Legislative Management to study the feasibility and desirability of the establishment of county or multi-county emergency response centers outside of urban centers that already maintain emergency response agencies with around-the-clock staffing.

Minutes:

Written testimony # 1 Rep. Gail Mooney
Written testimony # 2 Gerry Roach

Chairman Burckhard opened the hearing for HCR 3028. Senators Burckhard, Anderson, Bekkedahl, Dotzenrod, Grabinger was in attendance. Senator Judy Lee was absent.

Rep. Gail Mooney (1:31-6:14) Written testimony #1.

Senator Grabinger From my seeing this I am not really understanding why we need the study because if these small political subdivisions want to get together and have their own center, why wouldn't they study that on their own? Why would we do a state-wide study? Are you looking for the study to come back with an answer that we need one here, we need one here, is that the point?

Rep. Gail Mooney I think that really does kind of sum it up. I think that in some communities they have taken it upon themselves to do exactly what it is that your describing. But when we remember, that most of these first responders, whether it's fire, ambulance or other they are volunteers. So these volunteers are busy trying to conduct the business of just having or taking care of day to day business as best as they can. So I don't know that in most communities that they have an individual maybe who is able or willing to be able to step into that type of leadership role to research how they would go about doing things like this, how they would implement a multi-jurisdictional. How do they actually do that? I think for the average citizen who just wants to do their public duty of going out there and providing this very meaningful service to us, I don't know that everybody is in the condition of being able to do that. When Jerry first told me about this one year ago, the more I thought about it, I thought it really did kind of align with that idea of the human service centers that we do have in North Dakota so that you still have your local delivery of services, but somewhere there's got to be this hub or connectivity that helps with timing, that helps with current practices, that helps with everything from equipment to funding. I

think the challenges that these local entities are facing on an individual basis are really pretty dramatic in some cases.

Gerry Roach (9:13-13:58) Testified in support of HCR 3028, written testimony # 2.

Chairman Burckhard You know we have 2100 political subdivisions in North Dakota, like 1300 townships, 357 cities, 187 school districts, whatever it all adds up to 2100 political subdivisions and so your concept here is to centralize some of that with emergency response systems?

Gerry Roach What I would like to see is two counties share a center. In that center would be maybe two emergency responders that would help in enhance these volunteers. They would go out and get the training, bring it back to them and be able to help put the mutual aid, the leadership, to bring it together. It's like the all-state basketball team they bring players from all over but there is one leader that makes them good. That is what I would like with our emergency response basically.

Chairman Burckhard How do we fund this? Do you have any idea, any thoughts?

Gerry Roach Oh yea, I want the state to study. I want the state to come back and say yes, this is what we are going to do. I want Homeland Security and the State to fund a building and equipment and then the counties to take over after that. The equipment there is another problem. All these trucks, half of these trucks sitting in these fire departments are straight stick. To find someone who can drive a clutch it's impossible. The little challenges that we are facing out there, it gets bigger and bigger.

Senator Grabinger Having been a former volunteer firefighter for years, and chief of a volunteer fire department, we have designated regional training centers. We tried to put one into Jamestown and we got the slab laid and everything, we just haven't got the money to build a building and the structure. There is an effort to want to do this stuff, but it really is coming down to money. There is already a plan to put in regional training centers throughout the state, is that not true? How can we get that money?

Gerry Roach Well correct. So you're Jamestown, let's say we get somebody down in Ellendale. That is what an hour away. My plan for these first responders that would be full time there, would go to these centers, get the training, and be able to bring it back to these local guys that's working at Gwinner. They can only come in for maybe one hour in the evening, and make it easier to bring the training back to the local volunteers will make it easier on their pocketbook, social life and everything. But there will still be times when they will have to go to their regional training center. They would help with the tracking of training needed for these volunteers, which is getting more and more every day.

Senator Judy Lee Two questions if I may. The first one is whether or not , a statement which is that the state has put significantly more money into training and equipment dollars for rural fire departments in the last biennium for sure, maybe it was even before that. I wondered if you had been able to access any of that money?

Gerry Roach Well you know the money that gets put in and then you split it up amongst how many subdivisions, once it goes down, basically like us, if we get enough money to replace 5 to 10 oxygen tanks a year we are really lucky. That has got to be switched up all the time. By the time it gets spread out its gets very small. You've got lots of greedy little piggies out there with lots more writing skills on staff than our little volunteer departments.

Senator Judy Lee This was all pretty much to volunteers. I don't think any of it went to paid departments. I live in a place where the volunteer fire departments either one or two paid staff people that handle a pretty big department at this point, but everybody who is in it is a volunteer.

Gerry Roach Well that's the cost I would like to see in these rural areas set up. Kind of like that where you have your two full time ones that direct the volunteers.

Senator Judy Lee So may I ask my second question. Have you considered at all a possibility of a countywide fire department and emergency services division because we really don't need to have? Obviously the work load is going to be different for somebody in Ellendale, than it is in West Fargo. So I understand exactly what you're saying and I just think all of the volunteers in this state whether they are emergency services providers handling crashes, or whether its volunteer fire fighters are just angels and we are so fortunate to have everybody doing what they do. But we also have to be and we need to keep you all up to speed, with equipment and training as much as possible. But there are some efficiencies that might come perhaps and this might be part of the study, in looking at a region wide or a county wide fire department or emergency services division and we've always been really anxious to keep everything local. I am a local control nut myself, but some of this stuff maybe we need to have a little broader view about having maybe the population center in the county which is usually the county seat, be a location of an office but maybe, a couple of satellite places to that they can make that run in the length of time it needs to be done. You've got regions for ambulances already, service areas for ambulances and stuff, so I am just wondering if you've given any thought to whether or not you might support kind of a regionalized service that would include all of that and cut down on the administration a bit, but have a little bigger pool of workers to handle the needs?

Gerry Roach Basically that is what I am after is a regional wide center like that. We can't basic, the area where I live in and I am assuming the areas out of Fargo/Morehead. Those little towns out of Bismarck, little towns out of Minot. I know that Burlington up there, they are hating it. It's basically we can't rely on the bigger towns and the bigger towns are not going to leave there city to help us out unless it is to save life.

Senator Judy Lee But I am talking about not maintaining every little individual small volunteer fire department, but rather having, let's say Burleigh County because none of us live in Burleigh County except the clerk, I guess. So it's something that is not our county. So we're not going to be provincial about it. Having a Burleigh County fire district, but that means there wouldn't be one in Bismarck, and one in Lincoln and one in whatever else around here, but rather they would all be part of one system. It may be a really crummy idea, and the gentlemen from the Association of Counties can tell us what he thinks about that too. No surprises. But it's a little different structure than what I am hearing you say which was a coordinator that would make sure all of these volunteer fire departments all

had what they need. I am talking about having them be part of a bigger one- step. We would have a county fire department.

Gerry Roach I don't know. That is kind of what I am after. But, that's why we need a study to look at this stuff. We have Homeland Security and Senator Heitkamp that's wants to look at this stuff. Our state is changing so fast and so quick, it's time we study it and see what we've to do to keep our quality of life. We all drive down these highways and between here and West Fargo, you go in the ditch in Medina, is there going to be somebody there to help you. Probably Jamestown that would be your best bet.

Senator Judy Lee Actually I have great confidence in the trauma system that we have in the state now and I have great confidence in our Emergency Medical services providers, so they are way better trained than what they used to be including critical access hospitals.

Senator Bekkedahl My great Grandfather Louis Bekkedahl homesteaded in Mekinock in the 1880's before it was Mekinock. So I know your area very well. We see this out west as well. I am from Williston now, and we see this in Watford City and McKenzie County and we do the best we can out there, but its burning out the volunteers is what we are hearing. We can provide grants and we have from our counties not just for facilities but for equipment and equipping facilities that has helped. But the volunteers are getting burned out and they are seeing massive accidents on the highways and the post- traumatic stress disorder PTSD that they are experiencing is one phenomenon we don't want to see more of but we are. We are losing them from that aspect as well so the training is important. What I am getting to is I like the idea of the study because I think for what we do in the cities is we start drawing circles around our populations in the city and we say we have a certain number of responses within this circle diameter, and in a certain amount of time. In the rural areas, you are not always able to do that because the spread of the communities is so large, so it may make sense to say maybe you place a center in this part of Williams County and it takes care of everybody within in that 10-15 minute response time. But the bigger issue I see with this study is staffing because the volunteers are literally just getting burned out. I know and you know the amount of time it takes to train for these things anymore for the certifications and its massive. So, kudos to everybody that does it now, but I would like the idea of the study.

Gerry Roach I don't believe we'll ever in the rural areas be able to cut our response down to a 5-10 minute response. All as we can help wish for is somebody that will be there eventually, that is trained and willing to help.

Terry Traynor North Dakota Association of Counties We ran this by our county commissioners and they all agreed this would be a worthy study. They recognized the challenges that the EMS responders and some fire responders as well are having and this may not be the answer for every county, but it's an answer and just studying this issue is important because they see the challenges that the responders face.

Tom Nehring Director of the Division of the Mercy Medical Services; within the North Dakota Department of Health. The division of Mercy Medical Services and Trauma continues to work very hard with trying to establish a system within the state of North Dakota. I believe that is what this concurrent resolution is doing. It is studying system

development across the state of North Dakota. Certainly from our perspective we are supposed to remain neutral, however, I believe that a study of fire and EMS with the volunteers in the state of North Dakota is absolutely essential.

Blake Crosby, Executive Director, North Dakota League of Cities I concur with what Senator Bekkedahl had to say as far as volunteers. The smaller cities in North Dakota are kind of reaching a critical tipping point when it comes to volunteers and the ability to maintain those volunteers. So, the League of Cities would certainly be supportive of the study. It really is a public health and public safety issue and that is indeed a state responsibility. We would also encourage a do pass on HCR 3028.

Chairman Burckhard asked for those in favor, opposition, neutral to HCR 3028. He closed the hearing on HCR 3028.

Senator Judy Lee I move do pass on HCR 3028.

2nd. **Senator Howard Anderson**

Committee Discussion

Senator Dotzenrod I am just trying to remember. Did the ambulances in the last session, didn't the ambulances have a bill to regionalize ambulance services and look for funding? Was that in the 13 session that they did that?

Tom Nehring I am sorry with the vacuum cleaner and the door opening I didn't get all of the question.

Senator Dotzenrod It was my understanding that I thought it was the last session, maybe the one before, that the ambulances had done quite a bit of work before the legislative session began and they had a proposal to regionalize ambulance services and they wanted some money to fund it. They came to the Legislature. It probably doesn't affect this resolution. I just thought there was some history there where they had been some work done, to try and get something done to sort of respond to what this resolution asked for. I just wanted to know if my memory is right?

Tom Nehring Your exactly right. It wasn't just last legislative session, but the one prior to that as well. What happened out of the 2013 legislative session, with the establishment of funding areas for grants in the state of North Dakota which is basically a whole package of grant applications with regards to a point value that is determined basically by need of that particular funding area, by collaboration which is a full 33% of the application and then financial status. So, basically you are absolutely correct. We have 94 funding area which it too many in the state of North Dakota. We've incentivized funding areas to collaborate and work together and so that is an ongoing process. As a matter of fact right now the applications for those grants are the ambulance services at the funding areas right now. So it does encourage collaboration. We probably have too many funding areas however.

Senator Dotzenrod Is there a state appropriation? I mean are you funded every two years, does the state put some money into this? How does that work?

Tom Nehring Yes there is an appropriation and the last biennium it was \$6.6 Million dollars for the biennium. This year it came out in the Governor's budget at \$8 Million which was reduced basically down to I believe it was back to \$6.6 Million and then there was an addition of \$500,000 so currently that sits at \$7.1 Million dollars for the ambulance services. Now, unfortunately the requests that we get from these funding areas is about double what we have to give out. So, we have to go through a process of cutting everything back, the fear with that is, are people going to be able to complete their projects with only half of the funding. So, in about 70 funding areas out of the 94, on an annual basis, take advantage of this.

Senator Grabinger You probably weren't here when I was discussing the regional training centers and the plan for them across the state of North Dakota for the firefighters. Is there any money anywhere to assist these communities in building these regional training centers? Like in Jamestown we wanted too, we just don't have the money. We want to put in a burn building for training and so forth, is there anywhere in the state has anything that they can assist these communities if they want to do this? That in turn will help these smaller communities get the training they need.

Tom Nehring There is no large pot of money to do that. Within the division of Mercy Medical Services we currently have training institutions which is conceptually the same thing as regional. What we have for biennium for training out of the division of Mercy Medical Services \$940,000 that typically has been for help in re-certification of the volunteers to maintain their certification as EMT's or different levels of training. I don't see that as being a large enough amount of money to be able to establish regional training centers. However, I should also tell you that I believe that the division is certainly in favor of regional training centers.

Chairman Burckhard We've got a motion and a 2nd for do pass. Any other discussion?

Roll call vote:

6-0-0

Carrier: **Senator Grabinger**

Date: 4.2.15
Roll Call Vote: 1

2015 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE
ROLL CALL VOTES
BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 3028

Senate Political Subdivisions Committee

☐ Subcommittee

Amendment LC# or Description: _____

Recommendation: ☐ Adopt Amendment
☒ Do Pass ☐ Do Not Pass ☐ Without Committee Recommendation
☐ As Amended ☐ Rerefer to Appropriations
☐ Place on Consent Calendar
Other Actions: ☐ Reconsider ☐ _____

Motion Made By Sen. J. Lee Seconded By Sen. Anderson

Senators	Yes	No	Senators	Yes	No
Chairman Burckhard	X				
Senator Anderson	X		Senator Dotzenrod	X	
Senator Bekkedahl	X		Senator Grabinger	X	
Senator Judy Lee	X				

Total (Yes) 6 No 0

Absent 0

Floor Assignment Senator Grabinger

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

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

HCR 3028: Political Subdivisions Committee (Sen. Burckhard, Chairman) recommends **DO PASS** (6 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). HCR 3028 was placed on the Fourteenth order on the calendar.

2015 TESTIMONY

HCR 3028

HCR 3028

2/19/2015

1.1

**HCR 3028 - Emergency Response Centers
Representative Gail Mooney
Political Subdivisions Committee
February 19, 2015**

Good morning Mr. Chairman and members of the Political Subs Committee. For the record, I am Representative Gail Mooney of District 20.

Thank you for the opportunity to introduce HCR 3028. This resolution is the brain child of Gerry Roach, constituent of District 20 and resident of Emerado, ND who is here to provide more detailed information on the concept of Emergency Response Centers. I equate the idea to that of a similar approach taken for regionally centralized administration and service delivery for human services needs in North Dakota - a model that has proven to be very effective.

In thinking of this idea, I began to wonder about the makeup of the communities in our state. Its common knowledge we're a rural state, but I wondered what, exactly, that means in practical terms?

Geographically:

North Dakota ranks 17th in size among the 50 states.

The total area of North Dakota is 70,703 sq miles.

You would travel 352 miles from Fargo to Beach, and 212 miles from Pembina to Hankinson.

A quick Google search produced some interesting statistics related to demographics:

401 Cities, towns and villages

9 =	15,000+ Population	2%
42 =	1000 - 14,999	10%
43 =	500 - 999	11%
128 =	100 - 499	32%
66 =	50 - 99	17%
113 =	4 - 49	28%

This data, along with the three maps included in your packets are presented here as a means to illustrate what we already know, but don't necessarily take the time to put in to the context of the day-to-day living of the folks that live in our great state. As our population continues to change; as our oil, coal, commercial, agricultural and tourist industries continue to grow and expand; our needs are shifting. The critical needs of emergency response throughout the state is also changing, but currently we continue to deal with this need in much the same way we did a century ago - each community - as best they can - striving to meet the 21st century needs and challenges they face.





Gerry will provide additional information and insights on these challenges, and why it is so very important we, as a state - and as a partner with our local communities - take formal steps to begin to explore alternative approaches to our emergency services in North Dakota.

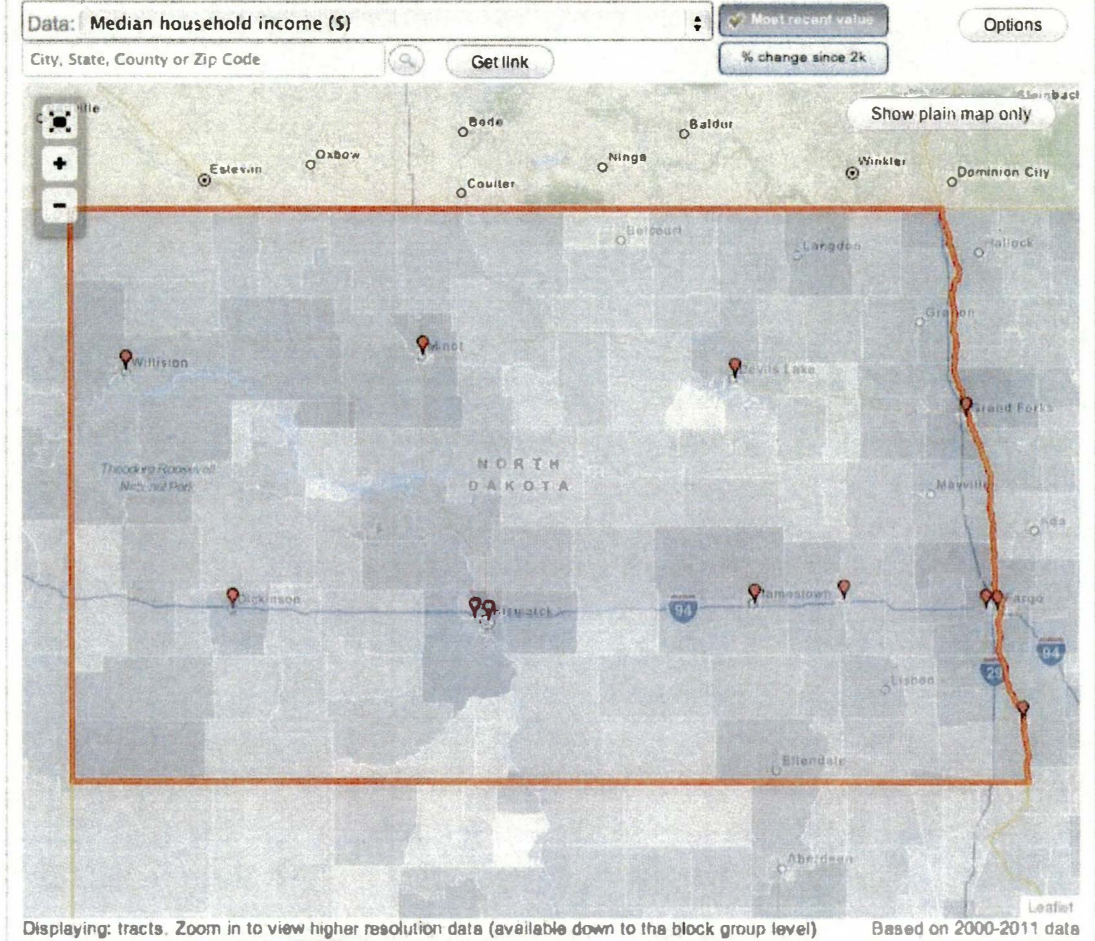
Mr. Chairman - thank you for this time. I'll be glad to answer any questions I am able to.

North-Dakota Bigger Cities (6000+ residents)

Bigger Cities (6000+ residents)

Name:

Map	Name	Population
	Bismarck, ND	64,751
	Devils Lake	7,231
	Dickinson, ND	19,697
	Fargo, ND	109,779
	Grand Forks	53,456
	Jamestown, ND	15,323
	Mandan	18,978
	Minot, ND	43,746
	Valley City	6,589
	Wahpeton, ND	7,800
	West Fargo	27,478
	Williston, ND	18,532

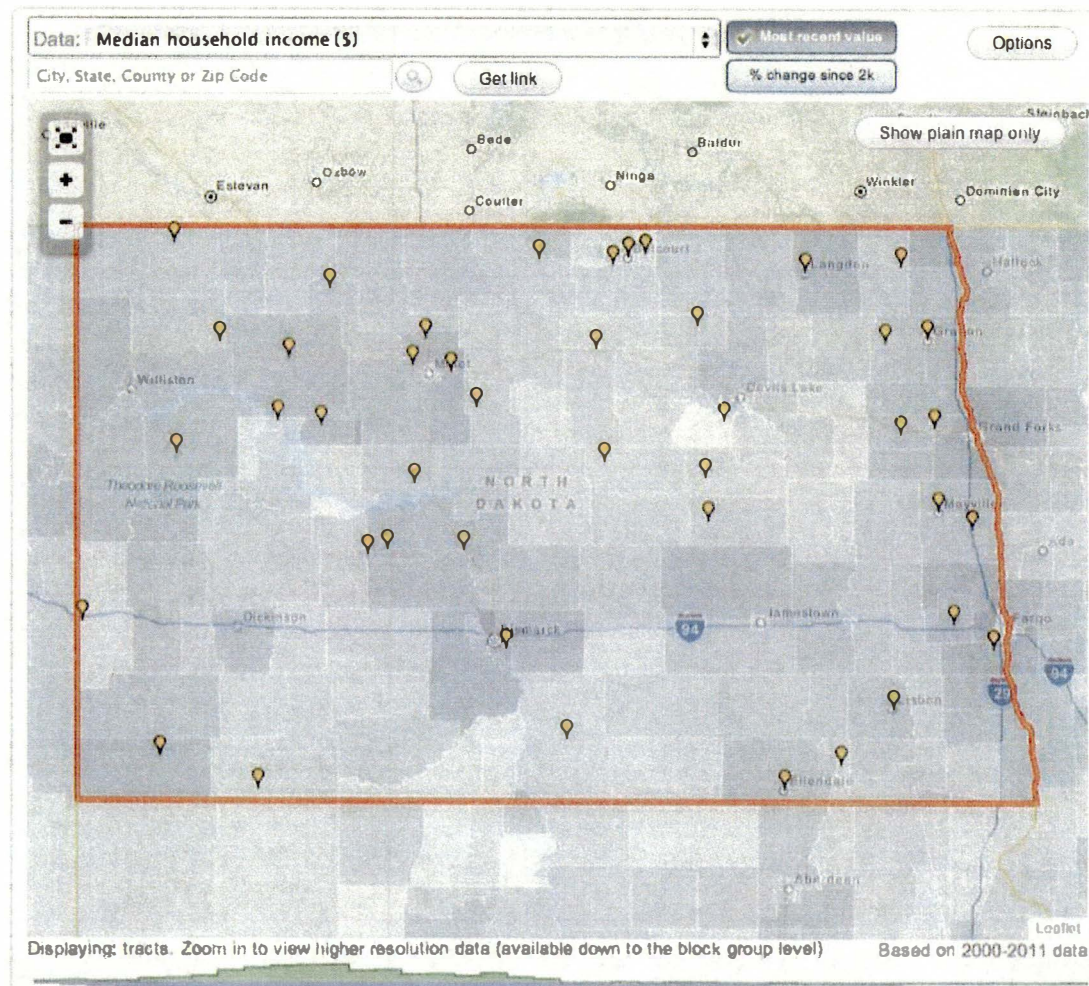


North-Dakota Smaller Cities, Towns, and Villages (1000-6000 residents)

Smaller Cities, Towns, and Villages (1000-6000 residents)

Name:

Map	Name	Population
	Beach	1,090
	Belcourt	2,078
	Beulah, ND	3,142
	Bottineau	2,287
	Bowman, ND	1,676
	Burlington, ND	1,056
	Cando	1,150
	Carrington	2,097
	Casselton	2,432
	Cavalier	1,276
	Crosby, ND	1,212
	Ellendale, ND	1,390
	Fort Totten	1,243
	Garrison, ND	1,517
	Grafton, ND	4,312
	Grand Forks AFB	2,367
	Harvey, ND	1,815
	Hazen, ND	2,420
	Hettinger	1,204
	Hillsboro, ND	1,602
	Horace	2,496
	Kenmare	1,062



North-Dakota Very Small Towns and Villages (< 1000 residents)

Very Small Towns and Villages (< 1000 residents)

Name:

Map	Name	Population
	Abercrombie	261
	Alexander, ND	269
	Anamoose	245
	Aneta	218
	Argusville	480
	Arthur, ND	343
	Ashley, ND	731
	Belfield	842
	Berthold	477
	Bowbells	368
	Buxton, ND	322
	Cannon Ball	875
	Carson, ND	284
	Center, ND	571
	Cooperstown, ND	960
	Davenport, ND	253
	Des Lacs	206
	Drake	287
	Drayton	806
	Dunseith	787
	East Dunseith	500
	Edgeley	559

Data: Median household income (\$)

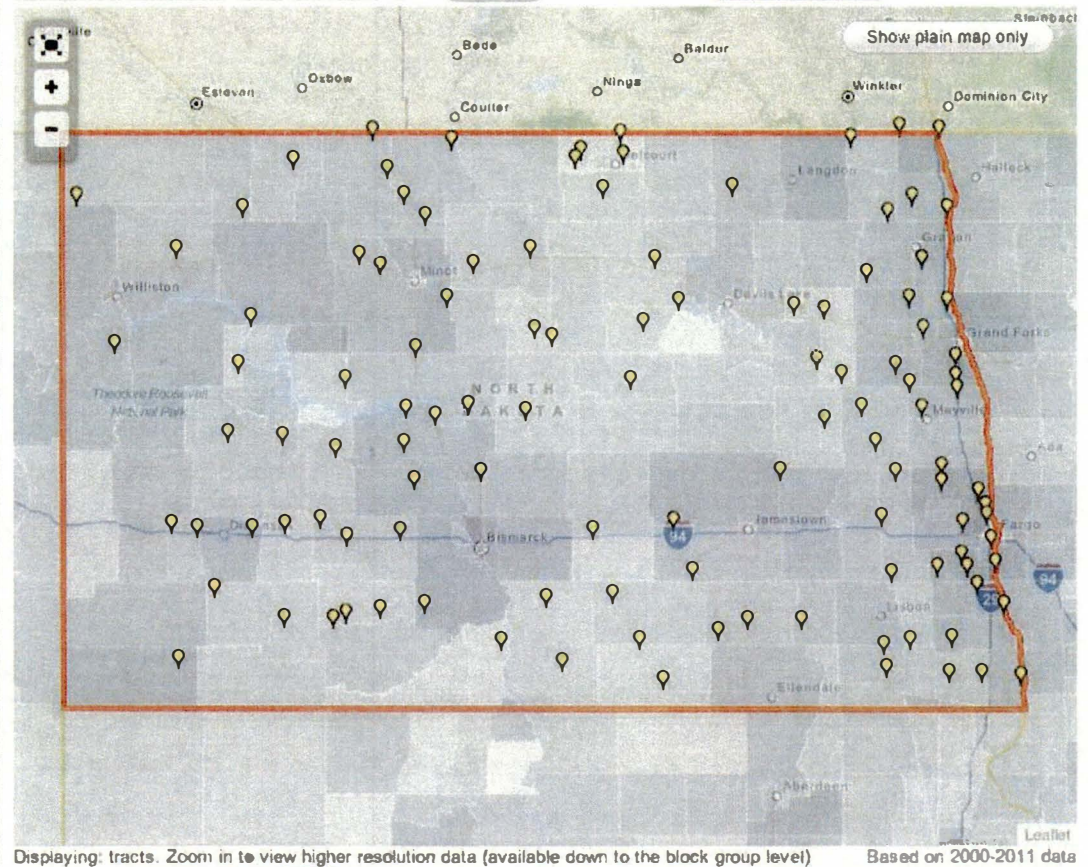
Most recent value

Options

City, State, County or Zip Code

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Ladies and Gentlemen of the Political subdivision House Concurrent Resolution NO.3028

My name is Gerry Roach I live in Rural Grand Forks County and I am on the Board of Directors for the Emerado rural fire dept. I grew up on a ranch near Fort Ransom, ND and have always been a part of a rural community.

While I was growing up, when there was a fire or any type of emergency, the employees of the local meat locker, welding shop, restaurant, mechanic shop, bar, along with local farmers, or any warm bodies' walking on the street were the people charged with responding to an emergency. It was a different time in our state. Our small towns had more jobs that allowed people to work locally rather than what we see today with people commuting to larger towns for work. Back then, people were available during the day for emergencies, there was no need for a lot of specialized training. Overall, our lives and emergencies were simpler.

Now let's fast forward 40 years. I now live in rural Grand Forks County. There are less people needed in the rural areas and small towns. Farmers now farm the land now with 2 people that use to take 6 people. Small town businesses have dried up and people are commuting longer distances for work. If there is an emergency, it takes two, three, maybe even four fire departments to handle even a small- to moderate-sized fire or emergency. Like most small communities, we are a bedroom community to a bigger town. What that means to us is that if an emergency happens during business hours, most people are gone working. In addition to logistic problems, the increased level of training needed has deterred people from becoming volunteers for local fire departments. People cannot take the nights, weekends and sometimes work days to attend the training. It's just too much given especially when often times the cost of training is paid by the volunteer, in addition to possible lost wages.

We are a growing state, and it is time we take a serious look at our rural emergency response system. As you are traveling down the road, ask yourself if I have a car accident, is there someone that will be there to help? Our state has oil in the west which has experienced very fast growth and has been quite taxing on our volunteers, as you very well know. In the east, we have upcoming UAV growth and fertilizer plants being built. Just in my area, the Grand sky is coming with up to 3,000 new jobs which will lead up to an additional 6000 cars per day on Highway 2. There is also a new fertilizer plant that will put up to 500 extra trucks on our roads PER WEEK. Furthermore, there has been a substantial increase train traffic driven by both the ag and oil industries. Now is the time to take a look at North Dakota's rural emergency response systems. What I am proposing is a county, or by county, emergency response center. This center would house the sheriff's department, a fire department, and first responders. These people would have all training needed and would be on the scenes to help our volunteers. These people would track and help train all volunteers. It should be noted that the Grand Forks County Sherrieff fully supports the proposed emergency response centers and agrees that the risk of losing

2.2

rural fire departments is too great and without them, lives may be lost. Now is the time to look forward. Let's take care of this problem now before we have a disaster that cannot be handled by local volunteers. Help keep NORTH DAKOTA's quality of life a top priority. Thanks, Gerry Roach

Gerry Roach



EMERADO RURAL VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT, INC.
BOX 196
EMERADO, NORTH DAKOTA 58228

2/17/2015

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I am writing this letter to express my concerns about having the Emerado Fire Department covering the proposed UAV facility near the Grand Forks Air Force Base as well as the other proposed construction projects that are slated to come to our protection district.

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My concern is that adding the UAV facility and other proposed constructions to the surrounding area is not only going to overwhelm our department but other departments as well.

I feel that a centrally located rapid response team that was manned 24/7 would greatly benefit our department but other departments in Grand Forks County.

Please take my years of experience and knowledge of the surrounding communities when you make your decision.

Marvin M. Jensen
Fire Chief
Emerado Fire Dept.

Forks Lath

From: "garymalm" <garythecommish@gmail.com>
Date: Wednesday, February 18, 2015 7:45 AM
To: <flpinc@qwestoffice.net>
Subject: HB3028

To whom it may concern:

I am writing this email to indicate my support for HB 3028. Gerry Roach has been supportive of the idea of centralized emergency service centers for a long period. Having worked with rural fire at Emerado he believes that with present rail traffic of oil and a future fertilizer plant at Grand Forks the potential for future emergency services is extremely increased. As a leader in Emerado Fire District he has seen increased decline in volunteers. also the number of people available in Grand Forks rural areas is rapidly declining. Gerry has worked hard this is a problem seeking a solution. Locally the resources are not available Please listen to his story and act in a way to solve it.

Gary Malm
garythecommish@gmail.com

GRAND FORKS COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

PO BOX 12608
GRAND FORKS, NORTH DAKOTA 58208-2608
122 SOUTH FIFTH STREET, SUITE 210
PHONE: 701-780-8280 FAX: 701-780-8307

**SHERIFF ROBERT W ROST**

February 17, 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

RE: HB3028

The State of North Dakota needs and can't be without its rural fire departments.

Rural fire departments are having trouble staffing and acquiring equipment that is extremely essential for the preservation of life and property in the State of North Dakota.

North Dakota is essentially a rural state, depending on rural farms for agriculture and oil out in western North Dakota. All of these rural areas rely on volunteer fire departments and EMS ambulance services.

The North Dakota Legislators must take a serious look at funding these very important and much needed emergency response resources. It's important to remember if the legislators don't look at how they can help, many of the rural fire departments will vanish. If that happens, citizens in this state may lose property and/or their lives.

You as Legislators' have a responsibility to take care of the citizens of North Dakota no matter what the cost.

As the Sheriff of Grand Forks County I have seen what these rural volunteer fire departments have done for the citizens they service and it's extremely important to sustain these rural fire departments. I hope you will see the need as well.

Sincerely,

Sheriff Robert W. Rost
Grand Forks County Sheriff's Department

**HCR 3028 – Emergency Response Centers
Representative Gail Mooney
Senate Political Subdivisions Committee
April 2, 2015**

Good morning Mr. Chairman and members of the Political Subs Committee. For the record, I am Representative Gail Mooney of District 20.

Thank you for the opportunity to introduce HCR 3028. This resolution is the brain child of Gerry Roach, constituent of District 20 and resident of Mekinock, ND who is here to provide more detailed information on the concept of Emergency Response Centers. I equate the idea to that of a similar approach taken for regionally centralized administration and service delivery for human services needs in North Dakota – a model that has proven to be very effective.

In considering this idea, I began to wonder about the makeup of the communities in our state. Its common knowledge we're a rural state, but I wondered what, exactly, that means in practical terms?

Geographically:

North Dakota ranks 17th in size among the 50 states.

The total area of North Dakota is 70,703 sq miles.

You would travel 352 miles from Fargo to Beach, and 212 miles from Pembina to Hankinson.

A quick Google search produced some interesting statistics related to demographics:

401 Cities, towns and villages

9 =	15,000+ Population	2%
42 =	1000 – 14,999	10%
43 =	500 – 999	11%
128 =	100 – 499	32%
66 =	50 – 99	17%
113 =	4 – 49	28%

This data, along with the three maps included in your packets, are presented here as a means to illustrate what we already know, but don't necessarily stop to put into the context of the day-to-day living of the folks that live in our great state. As our population continues to change; as our oil, coal, commercial, agricultural and tourist industries continue to grow and expand; our needs are shifting.

The critical needs of emergency response throughout the state is also changing, but currently we continue to deal with this need in much the same way we did a century ago – each community - as best they can – striving to meet the 21st century needs and challenges they face. And, while it is true that there is nothing prohibiting communities from entering in to their own multi-jurisdictional agreements, the lack of an established leadership role for guidance and direction places additional burdens on local leaders.

Mr. Roach will provide additional information and insights on these challenges, and why it is so very important we, as a state – and as a partner with our local communities - take formal steps to begin to explore alternative approaches to our emergency services in North Dakota.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee – thank you for your time and consideration. I'll be glad to answer any questions I am able to.

North-Dakota Very Small Towns and Villages (< 1000 residents)

Very Small Towns and Villages (< 1000 residents)

Name:

Map	Name	Population
	Abercrombie	261
	Alexander, ND	269
	Anamoose	245
	Aneta	218
	Argusville	480
	Arthur, ND	343
	Ashley, ND	731
	Belfield	842
	Berthold	477
	Bowbells	368
	Buxton, ND	322
	Cannon Ball	875
	Carson, ND	284
	Center, ND	571
	Cooperstown, ND	960
	Davenport, ND	253
	Des Lacs	206
	Drake	287
	Drayton	806
	Dunseith	787
	East Dunseith	500
	Edgeley	559

Data: Median household income (\$)

Most recent value

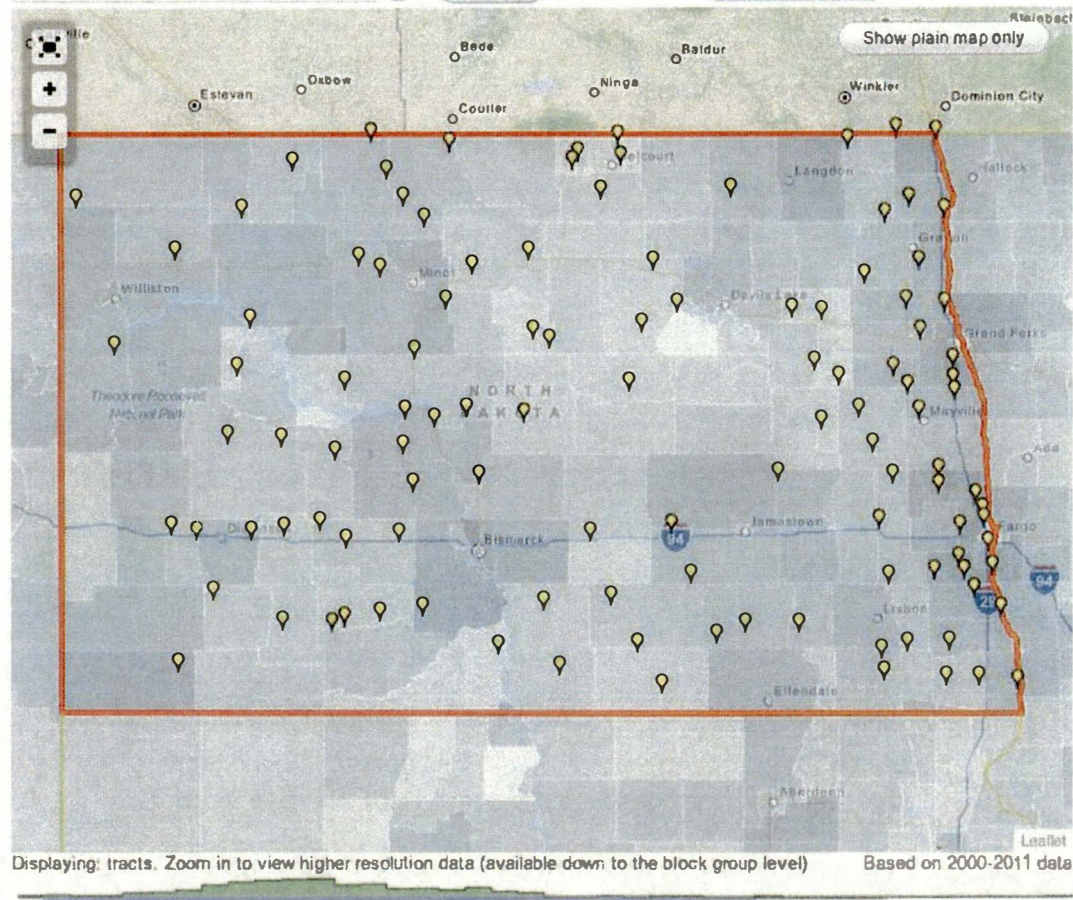
Options

City, State, County or Zip Code

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Show plain map only



North-Dakota Smaller Cities, Towns, and Villages (1000-6000 residents)

Smaller Cities, Towns, and Villages (1000-6000 residents)

Name:

Map	Name	Population
	Beach	1,090
	Belcourt	2,078
	Beulah, ND	3,142
	Bottineau	2,287
	Bowman, ND	1,676
	Burlington, ND	1,056
	Cando	1,150
	Carrington	2,097
	Casselton	2,432
	Cavalier	1,276
	Crosby, ND	1,212
	Ellendale, ND	1,390
	Fort Totten	1,243
	Garrison, ND	1,517
	Grafton, ND	4,312
	Grand Forks AFB	2,367
	Harvey, ND	1,815
	Hazen, ND	2,420
	Hettinger	1,204
	Hillsboro, ND	1,602
	Horace	2,496
	Kenmare	1,062

Data: Median household income (\$)

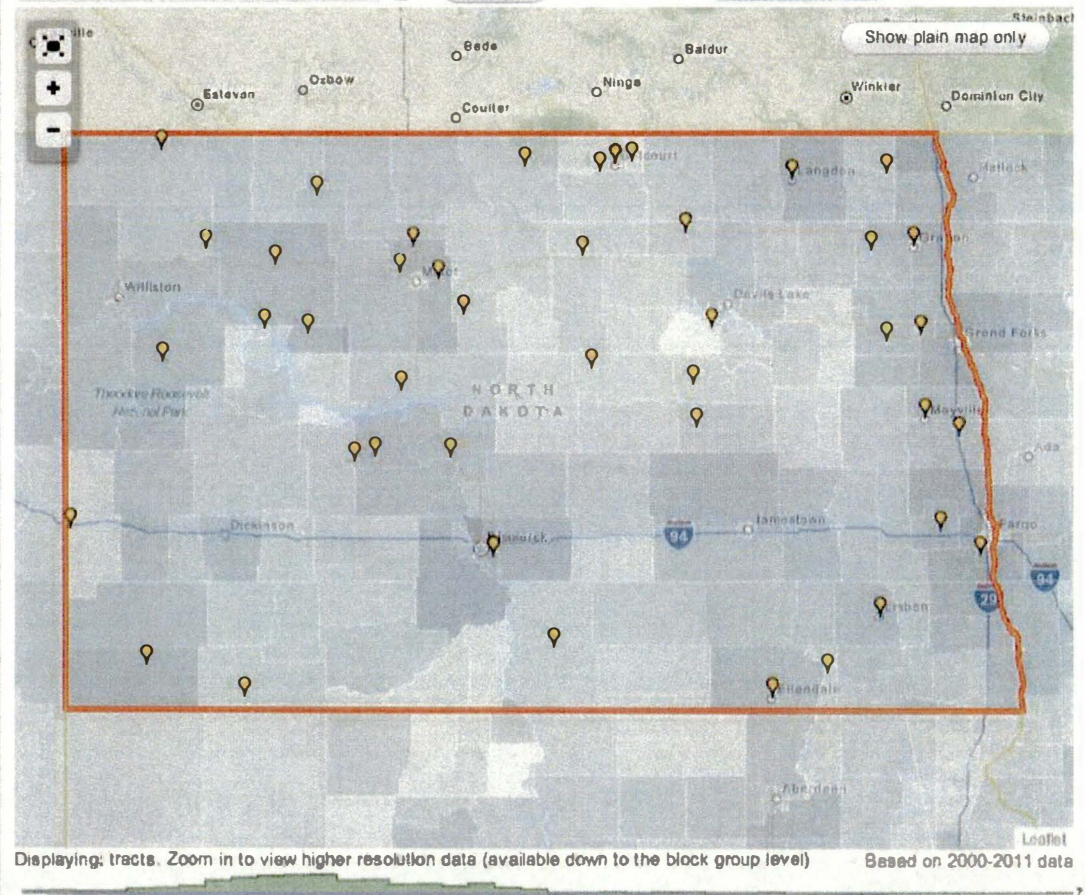
Most recent value

Options

City, State, County or Zip Code

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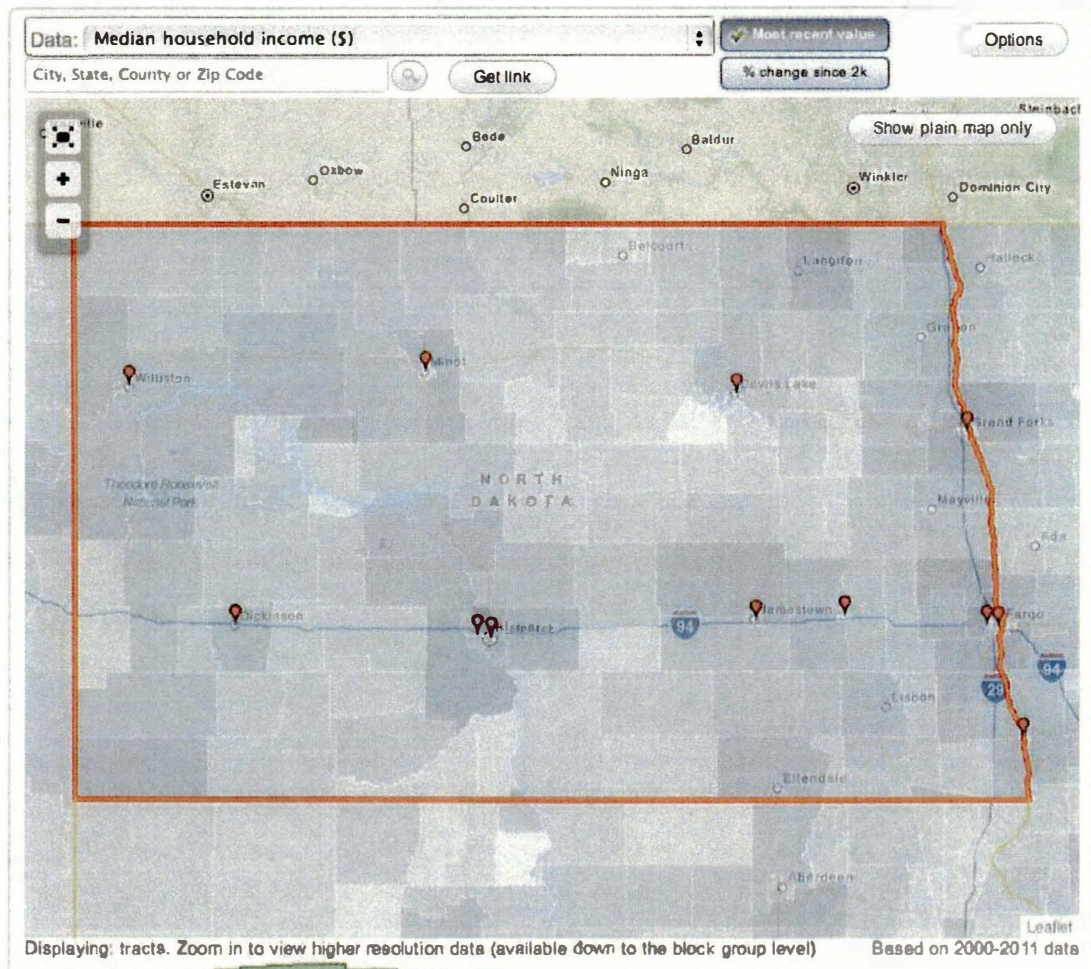


North-Dakota Bigger Cities (6000+ residents)

Bigger Cities (6000+ residents)

Name:

Map	Name	Population
	Bismarck, ND	64,751
	Devils Lake	7,231
	Dickinson, ND	19,697
	Fargo, ND	109,779
	Grand Forks	53,456
	Jamestown, ND	15,323
	Mandan	18,978
	Minot, ND	43,746
	Valley City	6,589
	Wahpeton, ND	7,800
	West Fargo	27,478
	Williston, ND	18,532



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BOX 196

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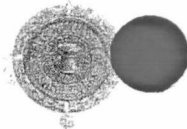
Marvin M. Jensen
Fire Chief
Emerado Fire Dept.

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SHERIFF ROBERT W ROST



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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert W. Rost", followed by a horizontal line.

Sheriff Robert W. Rost
Grand Forks County Sheriff's Department

Alejandro N. Mayorkas
Deputy Secretary

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20528
202 281 8704 tel
202 282 9181 fax



Homeland Security



2.5



Larimore Volunteer Fire
16 hrs

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3 mutual friends
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Day Delivery



Patrick Jensen
January 6 at 6:31 am

Thoughts and prayers out to all you responders and
families. T... See More

Comment

1 · 1



Heitkamp to talk emergency response training in Larimore, Grand...

U.S. Senator Heidi Heitkamp, D-N.D., will take a two-
day tour through Larimore, N.D., and Grand Forks.

WWW.GRANDFORKSHERALD.COM

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11 people like this



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Forks Lath

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Gary Malm
garythecommish@gmail.com

Senator Heidi Heitkamp (<http://www.heitkamp.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/home>)

PRESS RELEASES

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Mar 31 2015

Heitkamp & Top Homeland Security Official Reinforce Importance of Recruiting, Training ND Volunteer Firefighters

(<http://www.heitkamp.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/press-releases?ID=ab48c355-3933-431a-b754-16b0a103a06>)

Since 96 Percent of State's Firefighters are Volunteer, Heitkamp is Working to Address Problems Recruiting and Retaining Needed Volunteers who Keep ND Communities Safe

Continuing her Strong & Safe Communities Initiative, Senator Also Hears from Local First Responders about how her RESPONSE Act Would Help them Receive more Training & Resources

LARIMORE, N.D. – U.S. Senator Heidi Heitkamp today brought the number two top official of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to North Dakota to discuss training and recruitment for volunteer firefighters – which make up 96 percent of the state's first responders – and how the federal government can better respond to the needs of rural first responders.

During a roundtable discussion at the Larimore Fire Department – which houses a fully volunteer force – Heitkamp and DHS Deputy Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas heard from volunteer firefighters from Grand Forks and rural communities in northeast North Dakota about the challenges in recruiting and retaining volunteer firefighters to keep communities safe. As part of her **Strong & Safe Communities Initiative**

(<http://www.heitkamp.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/strong-and-safe-communities-initiative>),

Heitkamp has been working with community and federal leaders to address North Dakota's emerging safety challenges, like making sure North Dakota communities have a strong first responder defense force. Increasing demands for rural fire departments to provide more technical services has strained funding, training, and personnel resources – making it difficult for fire departments to find volunteers to do these jobs and stay in them.

Heitkamp also received feedback from emergency response personnel about how her RESPONSE Act, which would provide training and resources for first responders could help them do their jobs. Earlier this month, the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs **unanimously passed** (<http://www.heitkamp.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/2015/3/heitkamp-s-bill-to-improve-training-support-for-first-responders-unanimously-passes-senate-committee>) her bill to create a federal panel to make sure emergency response teams have the tools necessary to deal with crude oil train derailments, and last week the Senate adopted Heitkamp's amendment to plan for the panel's creation in its 2016 budget.

"Volunteer firefighters make up almost our entire statewide force. Yet, we must acknowledge the reality that it has become more difficult to get and keep volunteer firefighters in these jobs, but they are positions that are needed to protect our communities," said Heitkamp. "Working with Deputy Secretary Mayorkas, we can find solutions to help recruit and retain a strong volunteer force of first responders – which is needed now more than ever as we face many new challenges across our state. By planning strategically, including by passing my RESPONSE Act, we can equip our firefighters with the training and the resources they need to continue their vital service in our rural communities—just like my dad did as a volunteer firefighter when I was growing up in Mantador. Working together, we can help more volunteers step up to serve their communities while also making sure they have the best tools and resources to do their jobs and keep North Dakota families strong and safe."

Later today, Heitkamp will bring Mayorkas to Grand Forks to tour safety training efforts with public officials, local police and fire chiefs, and other leaders focused on emergency training where they will discuss efforts to boost training for emergency response teams.

Since the derailment of a crude oil train near Casselton in December 2013, Heitkamp has worked to reinforce on the need to make sure first responders have the necessary resources and training to protect North Dakota's families and communities. **Last March, Heitkamp brought Casselton Fire Chief Tim McLean to testify**

(<http://www.heitkamp.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/press-releases?ID=69cab099-86b4-4fd7-b06a-8b7d0a72bb2b>) at a Homeland Security Committee hearing she chaired to discuss his team's experience responding to the Casselton derailment. At the hearing, McLean and Heitkamp emphasized the need for federal homeland security investments in emergency training that were critical to his team in responding to the accident in Casselton.

Last month, Heitkamp **reintroduced her legislation to better support first responders** (<http://www.heitkamp.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/2015/2/heitkamp-reintroduces-bill-to-improve-support-for-first-responders-following-crude-train-derailments>) tasked with responding to potential incidents, such as derailments of trains carrying materials like crude oil, by making sure they get quality training and have access to the appropriate resources and effective communications. Heitkamp's ***Railroad Emergency Services Preparedness, Operational Needs, and Safety Evaluation (RESPONSE) Act***

(<http://www.heitkamp.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/2014/6/heitkamp-unveils-bill-to-better-support-first-responders-following-casselton-derailment>), would establish a public-private federal panel comprised of relevant federal agencies, emergency responders, technical experts, and the private sector for a review of training, resources, best practices, and unmet needs related to emergency responders to railroad hazmat incidents. Last week, the Senate adopted Heitkamp's amendment to the 2016 budget to include long-term planning for the federal panel her RESPONSE Act would create.

Heitkamp has consistently pushed for better resources and tools for North Dakota's fire departments. Last summer, she announced significant federal funds through Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for **new turnout gear, self-contained breathing apparatuses, and training** (<http://www.heitkamp.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/2014/7/heitkamp-announces-significant-federal-funds-for-park-river-volunteer-fire-department>) for the Park River Volunteer Fire Department's personnel, and for a **new air foam unit for Mandan Rural Fire Protection District's fire truck** (<http://www.heitkamp.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/2014/6/heitkamp-announces-significant-federal-funds-for-mandan-fire-department>).

Last fall, Heitkamp launched her Strong & Safe Communities Initiative to address emerging challenges facing North Dakota as a result of the state's energy boom by bringing a greater focus to keeping communities strong and families safe in their homes. Specifically, Heitkamp is leading a Strong & Safe Communities Task Force comprised of North Dakotans from across the state who have strong understandings of many of the new safety challenges the state faces – such as increases in drug-related crimes, human trafficking, infrastructure stress, the transportation of crude by rail, as well as other issues. This task force includes work to fortify emergency response and safety workers—like the 9,000 firefighters throughout North Dakota—by building an infrastructure that makes sure resources are growing apace with the increasing demand for their service.

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Permalink: <http://www.heitkamp.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/2015/3/heitkamp-top-homeland-security-official-reinforce-importance-of-recruiting-training-nd-volunteer-firefighters> (<http://www.heitkamp.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/2015/3/heitkamp-top-homeland-security-official-reinforce-importance-of-recruiting-training-nd-volunteer-firefighters>)

Contact Senator Heitkamp's press office at press@heitkamp.senate.gov

Contact Senator Heitkamp

Washington Office

SH-502 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510