2025 HOUSE TRANSPORTATION

HB 1106

2025 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Transportation Committee
Room JW327E, State Capitol

HB 1106
1/9/2025

A BILL for an Act to provide an appropriation to the department of transportation for nonfixed route transit program grants.

10:38 a.m. Chairman D. Ruby opened the hearing.

Members Present: Chairman D. Ruby, Vice Chairman Grueneich, Representatives Christianson, Dressler, Finley-DeVille, Frelich, Hendrix, Johnston, Kasper, Koppelman, Maki, Morton, Osowski, Schatz

Discussion Topics:

- Public Transit Program Grants
- Fiscal impact
- Urban and rural public transit opportunities

10:38 a.m. Representative Monson, District 19, introduced the bill and submitted testimony #28240 on behalf of Patricia Hansen.

10:53 a.m. Kirsten Dvorak, Executive Director, The Arc of North Dakota, testified in favor and submitted testimony #28246.

10:56 a.m. Trevor Vannett testified in favor.

10:58 a.m. Ben Ehreth testified in favor.

11:19 a.m. Roxane Romanick, Designer Genes of North Dakota, testified in favor and submitted testimony #28306.

11:23 a.m. Matt Gardner, Executive Director, ND League of Cities, testified in favor.

Additional written testimony:

Julianne Horntvedt, Executive Director, North Dakota State Council on Developmental Disabilities, submitted testimony # 28221 in favor.

Susan Dingle, District 35, submitted testimony # 28245 in favor.

11:28 a.m. Chairman D. Ruby closed the hearing.

Joseph Reed, Committee Clerk

Testimony
House Bill 1106
January 8, 2025

My name is Julianne Horntvedt and I am the Executive Director of the North Dakota State Council on Developmental Disabilities. I am submitting testimony on behalf of our Advocacy Committee.

It is crucial for the state to invest in transit systems that are accessible to people with disabilities. Currently, individuals with disabilities in North Dakota face significant barriers when it comes to transportation, limiting their ability to access essential services, employment opportunities, and social events. State funding would help stabilize the system, expand transit routes, increase staffing, and extend service hours, ensuring that people with disabilities can travel more freely and independently. With these improvements, we would create a more inclusive society where everyone, regardless of ability, can contribute to the workforce and fully participate in community life.

This investment would not only improve the lives of people with disabilities, but also strengthen the economy and promote greater equality across the state.

Julianne Horntvedt

701-328-4847

jhorntvedt@nd.gov

Testimony
House Bill 1106 – Department of Transportation
Funding for Public Transit
House Appropriations - Government Operations Division
January 9, 2025

Chairman Monson and members of the committee, my name is Pat Hansen. I am the executive director of South Central Adult Services in Valley City. I am also a member of the North Dakota Senior Service Providers and Dakota Transit Association. I am testifying in support of HB 1106.

The State Public Transit funding we receive is used to match federal dollars for operating transit services and as local match for purchasing vehicles for use in public transit. If we do not receive adequate state funding for match, we may be unable to access all of the federal dollars we are appropriated.

South Central Adult Services provides the same service in the very rural areas of North Dakota that are available in the larger cities. In the very rural counties we serve, which include LaMoure, Foster, Logan, McIntosh, Griggs, Emmons and Nelson, South Central provided 53,125 rides this past fiscal year. Barnes County (which is our "urban" county) provided 59,804 rides. This is a 9% increase over our last fiscal year. Local service is provided to communities within the counties, and transit is available from the southwestern counties to Bismarck 5 days per week, to Jamestown 3 days per week, from our eastern counties to Fargo 5 days per week and to Grand Forks 5 days per week. We are transporting dialysis patients from Strasberg, Linton, Wishek, Ashley, McVille, Lakota, Carrington and Valley City on a regular basis. We have made many trips to Fargo and Bismarck with patients for radiation treatments and chemotherapy in the last few months.

That is only the tip of the iceberg. We provide rides for local medical appointments, rides to work, school, daycare, Head Start, and many rides for local grocery shopping, hair appointments, rides to senior centers and rides for nursing homes and assisted living facilities. We currently have 32 full-time and 46 part-time transit employees. The cost of personnel has increased dramatically over the past few years. We have had to increase wages in order to compete with other employers in our area and have increased hours to keep up with the demand for services. This problem has increased since the pandemic. Even taking the impact on the residents of our counties out of the picture, if we do not receive adequate funding, the staff reductions in these rural counties would be devastating to our employees and to the small rural communities where there are very few jobs available.

Last fiscal year, even with the increase in State Aid, we had to use $462,808 (over 20% of our operating budget) in local dollars to meet expenses. That amount of local funding cannot be sustained long term. This concerns me on several levels as many of the people we serve do not have other options for transportation. Some of our rural riders would be forced to move to locations where medical services such as dialysis and cancer treatments are available. A large percentage of them would need long term care and are low-income. Many of the people we serve do not have vehicles. As one of our riders told me today, "I would be totally isolated without your service."

While many of North Dakota's rural public transit agencies provide much needed transportation to those already living here, our public transit services also play a role in drawing new people to our state. Many of those considering re-locating

to North Dakota from other states, come from large cities and urban areas where public transit is their main mode of transportation. A large number do not even own a vehicle. Access to public transportation, especially in rural communities, can be a determining factor in their decision making process. We believe that safe, reliable and sustainable public transportation is an integral piece of the puzzle when it comes to continued growth in North Dakota.

On a positive note, we have received many new vehicles in the past year. Many had been on back order for two or more years. This is a benefit to us as it decreases the amount of funding needed for repairs. It also provides much safer transportation to our passengers. I would also like to thank legislators for the increased funding this biennium, and the North Dakota Department of Transportation for their continued support of our agency. We are very fortunate to have the great staff we have in the Department.

Transit providers would like to see us get to a minimum of $12 million next biennium. This would ease some of the demand on local funding.

I have attached a map of our coverage area for your information.

Thank you for your consideration. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

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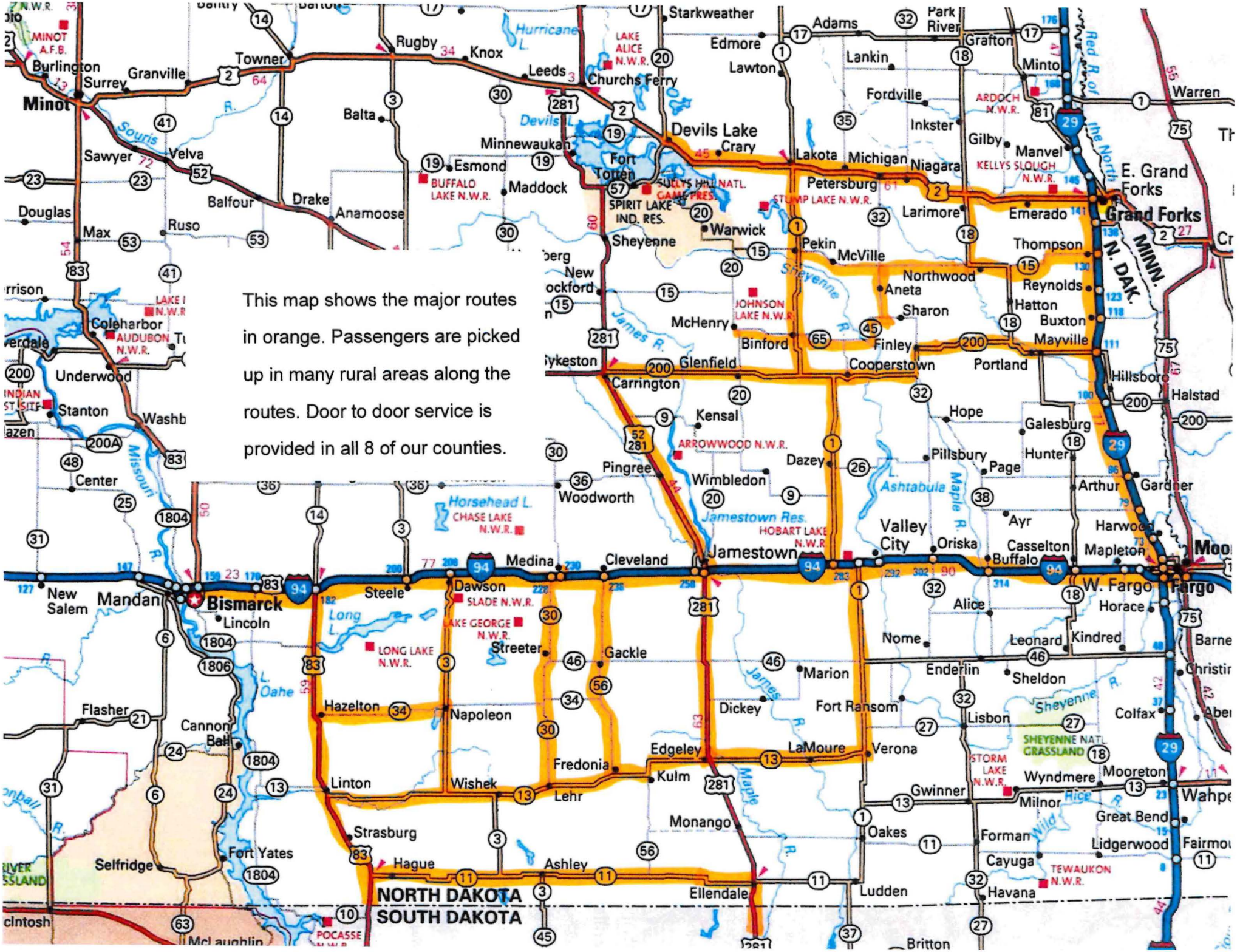

This map shows the major routes in orange. Passengers are picked up in many rural areas along the routes. Door to door service is provided in all 8 of our counties.
NORTH DAKOTA
SOUTH DAKOTA
Minot
Bismarck
Mandan
Jamestown
Devils Lake
Grand Forks
E. Grand Forks
Fargo
W. Fargo
Valley City
Dickinson
Williston
Watford City
Beulah
Hazen
Stanton
Underwood
Coleharbor
Garrison
Douglas
Max
Ruso
Balfour
Drake
Anamoose
Balta
Rugby
Towner
Granville
Burlington
Surrey
Sawyer
Velva
Minnewaukan
Esmond
Maddock
Fort Totten
Churchs Ferry
Leeds
Knox
Starkweather
Edmore
Lawton
Lankin
Fordville
Inkster
Gilby
Manvel
Grafton
Minto
Park River
Adams
Warren
Petersburg
Larimore
Emerado
Thompson
Reynolds
Buxton
Mayville
Portland
Hillsboro
Halstad
Northwood
Aneta
Sharon
Hatton
McHenry
Binford
Finley
Cooperstown
Carrington
Glenfield
Sheyenne
McVille
Pekin
Warwick
Lakota
Michigan
Niagara
Crary
Devils Lake
Fort Totten
Sykeston
New Rockford
Kensal
Dazey
Pingree
Wimbledon
Woodworth
Pillsbury
Page
Hope
Galesburg
Hunter
Arthur
Gardner
Harwood
Mapleton
Casselton
Buffalo
Oriska
Valley City
Ayr
Jamestown Res.
Horsehead L.
Ashtabula
Maple R.
Missouri R.
James R.
Sheyenne R.
Long L.
Oahe L.
Devils L.
Hurricane L.
Souris R.
Red R. of the North
N. DAK.
MINN.
Center
New Salem
Lincoln
Steele
Dawson
Medina
Cleveland
Streeter
Gackle
Napoleon
Hazelton
Flasher
Cannon Ball
Linton
Wishek
Strasburg
Hague
Selfridge
Fort Yates
Lehr
Fredonia
Edgeley
Kulm
LaMoure
Verona
Marion
Dickey
Fort Ransom
Enderlin
Sheldon
Lisbon
Colfax
Nome
Leonard
Kindred
Alice
Horace
Monango
Ashley
Ellendale
Ludden
Oakes
Gwinner
Milnor
Wyndmere
Mooreton
Great Bend
Lidgerwood
Forman
Cayuga
Havana
Britton
Marion
Harvey
Wahpeton
Christine
Aberdeen
Barnes
Fairmount
Rice R.
Wild Rice R.
Sheyenne R.
Maple R.
Missouri R.
Cannonball R.
Oahe L.
Long L.
Horsehead L.
Jamestown Res.
Ashtabula
Devils L.
Hurricane L.
Souris R.
Red R. of the North
James R.
Sheyenne R.
MINOT A.F.B.
LAKE ALICE N.W.R.
BUFFALO LAKE N.W.R.
SPIRIT LAKE IND. RES.
SULLYS HILL NATL. GAME PRES.
STUMP LAKE N.W.R.
JOHNSON LAKE N.W.R.
ARROWWOOD N.W.R.
HOBART LAKE N.W.R.
CHASE LAKE N.W.R.
SLADE N.W.R.
LAKE GEORGE N.W.R.
LONG LAKE N.W.R.
ARDOCH N.W.R.
KELLYS SLOUGH N.W.R.
SHEYENNE NATL GRASSLAND
STORM LAKE N.W.R.
TEWAUKON N.W.R.
AUDUBON N.W.R.
INDIAN ST SITE
POCASSE N.W.R.

HB 1106

My name is Susan Dingle; I live in Bismarck, District 35, and vote in every election. My testimony is in favor of HB1106. Entities from cities to counties across North Dakota need more money available in state grants for public transportation. State grants have been relatively static while operations costs, vehicle costs, parts, labor—drivers and mechanics—benefits, insurance, and related costs for running public transportation systems have gone up. Everywhere! Transportation providers get money from federal and state grants, at times from private grants, and also from local property taxes. The problem is, for all providers, the monies available do not quite cover the required costs. Either they try to raise property taxes, raise other taxes, or cut back services. In nearly every case, cutting back services means cutting into the bone—local transportation providers are not flush with cash or unused/unneeded routes or pick-ups and drop-offs. Service cutbacks mean regular users not getting needed rides; user dissatisfaction and inability to get around; drops in service quality, perhaps challenges to keeping service open. More state grant support for public transportation means less pressure on local support and less pressure on pushes to raise property taxes to support public transportation. This is another property tax relief measure, in effect, and a good one. Please vote for it.

The Arc
North Dakota

House Transportation

HB 1106

January 9, 2025

Rep D. Ruby and committee members. I am Kirsten Dvorak, Executive Director of The Arc of North Dakota. The Arc of North Dakota is the oldest non-profit disability advocacy organization for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) throughout the state. We appreciate the opportunity to express our support for House Bill No. 1106, which proposes an appropriation of $2,000,000 to the Department of Transportation for transit program grants during the biennium.

Access to reliable and affordable public transportation is critical for individuals with IDD. It directly impacts their ability to participate fully in community life, access employment opportunities, attend educational programs, and receive necessary healthcare services. Many individuals face isolation and a significant limitation on their independence without adequate transportation options.

House Bill No. 1106 addresses these pressing needs by allocating funds to enhance public transportation services across North Dakota. The importance of this investment is further underscored by findings presented by the Upper Great Plains Transportation Institute during the Government Services interim December meeting:

- **Population Impact:** North Dakota is home to approximately 96,378 individuals with disabilities, with an estimated 23% relying on specialized transportation to travel outside their homes.
- **Service Limitations:** Funding shortages have reduced coverage areas, restricted operating hours, and increased wait times. For example, during the 2023 Christmas holiday, transit services in Bismarck operated only from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., while services in Fargo and Grand Forks were closed entirely.
- **Disability Status:** Approximately 49% of rural transit riders and 52% of urban transit riders identify as having a disability.

These statistics illustrate the critical role that public transportation plays in the lives of North Dakota residents, particularly for older adults, individuals with disabilities, low-income households, and those without access to personal vehicles. By allocating $2,000,000 to the Department of Transportation for transit program grants, House Bill No. 1106 will:

- Expand service coverage to underserved areas.
- Enhance accessibility for individuals with disabilities.
- Empower residents to participate more fully in employment, education, healthcare, and community activities.

Supporting this bill represents a significant step toward fostering inclusivity, equity, and mobility for all North Dakotans. We urge the legislature to approve this funding to help remove transportation barriers and improve the quality of life for our most vulnerable residents.
Thank you for considering our perspective on this important matter.

Kirsten Dvorak

701-222-1854

DESIGNER GENES
A·DOWN·SYNDROME·SUPPORT·NETWORK

HB 1106
House Transportation
Thursday, January 9, 2025
Rep. Dan Ruby, Chair

Chairman Ruby and Members of the House Transportation Committee:

My name is Roxane Romanick and I'm writing as the representative for Designer Genes of ND, Inc.,. Designer Genes' membership represents 230 individuals with Down syndrome that either live in our state or are represented by family members in North Dakota. Designer Genes' mission is to strengthen opportunities for individuals with Down syndrome and those who support them to earn, learn, and belong. I am also the parent to an adult daughter with Down syndrome, who desires as much independence as any other young adult and who is working and trying hard to be a contributing North Dakota citizen.

Designer Genes is in support of HB 1106 and asks for your consideration of a "yes" vote. Ask any non-driving individual with a disability and/or who is ageing about how they access their community and you will need to be prepared to hear about how difficult and limiting it is to not be able to drive. North Dakota is not a state that is friendly to non-drivers due to our rural nature and vast spaces. The community of individuals with Down syndrome that I represent, especially the adults, are greatly impacted by not having more independent means of travel as most of them are not drivers. We have heard that more and more activities are limited for our individuals with Down syndrome that live in a group or apartment setting as public transportation options decline and there are decreasing staff available to provide transportation through our providers.

In the past, my husband and I worked out a weekly schedule with our daughter to decide how to make sure she could get to and from her job. She had a paratransit pass for the Bismarck ParaTransit system however, the rides were not dependable for getting to work on time. Long wait times, no subscription services, and difficulty with scheduling made return trips also impossible to count on. She is very adept at using a Ride Share app like Uber or Lyft, but a ride to work for her would have been roughly

$8.00 one way and this would total to around $250.00 a month. She also found that Uber and Lyft drivers were not always available. Bismarck's taxi services are expensive for someone on a fixed income. Elizabeth now lives in Minot, ND but her accepting her job at Minot State University was dependent on her finding housing close to the campus to avoid needing daily public transportation. Transportation is probably her greatest barrier to living as independently as possible.

Lack of transportation options has its costs. The Automated Vehicle Services for People with Disabilities—Involved Responsive Engineering (ASPIRE) Center at the University of Pittsburgh (UTC Spotlight Newsletter - January 2022 (transportation.gov)) noted in one their publications that "mitigating transportation-related barriers for people with disabilities would enable new employment opportunities for approximately two million people with disabilities and save $19 billion annually in healthcare expenditures from missed medical appointments alone." While Medicaid can cover non-emergency medical costs, there are no options available for individuals to use outside of the onerous demands of the para-transit system.

I believe that state sponsored support for increased transportation options for people with disabilities would have direct impact on individuals with Down syndrome and other disabilities to be fully contributing members in their communities.

Please consider the passage of HB 1106. I'm available for any questions.

Roxane Romanick
Designer Genes of ND, Inc.
701-391-7421
info@designergenesnd.com

2025 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Transportation Committee
Room JW327E, State Capitol

HB 1106
1/30/2025

A BILL for an Act to provide an appropriation to the department of transportation for transit program grants.

11:41 a.m. Chairman D. Ruby opened the meeting.

Members Present: Chairman D. Ruby, Vice Chairman Grueneich, Representatives Christianson, Dressler, Finley-DeVille, Frelich, Johnston, Hendrix, Kasper, Maki, Morton, Osowski, Schatz
Members Absent: Representative Koppelman

Discussion Topics:

- Committee action
- Increase in grant amount
- Local control

11:45 a.m. Representative Christianson moved to amend LC#25.0651.01001.

11:45 a.m. Representative Grueneich seconded the motion.

11:48 a.m. Voice vote - motion passed.

11:48 a.m. Representative Frelich moved a Do Pass as Amended.

11:48 a.m. Representative Johnston seconded the motion.

Representatives	Vote
Representative Dan Ruby	Y
Representative Jim Grueneich	Y
Representative Nels Christianson	Y
Representative Ty Dressler	N
Representative Lisa Finley-DeVille	Y
Representative Kathy Frelich	Y
Representative Jared Hendrix	Y
Representative Daniel Johnston	Y
Representative Jim Kasper	N
Representative Ben Koppelman	AB
Representative Roger A. Maki	N
Representative Desiree Morton	N
Representative Doug Osowski	N
Representative Mike Schatz	N

11:49 a.m. Motion passed 7-6-1.

11:51 a.m. Representative Johnston will carry the bill.

11:52 a.m. Chairman D. Ruby adjourned the meeting.

Janae Pinks, Committee Clerk

Chairman D. Rudy explained to committee bill would be rereferred to Appropriations.

25.0651.01001
Title.02000

Prepared by the Legislative Council staff for Representative D. Ruby
January 29, 2025

Sixty-ninth
Legislative Assembly
of North Dakota

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO

JB 1-30-25
1 of 1

HOUSE BILL NO. 1106

Introduced by

Representatives Monson, Jonas, Martinson, Meier, Schauer

Senators Mathern, Roers, Sorvaag

A BILL for an Act to provide an appropriation to the department of transportation for nonfixed route transit program grants.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:

SECTION 1. APPROPRIATION - DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION - TRANSIT GRANTS. There is appropriated out of any moneys in the general fund in the state treasury, not otherwise appropriated, the sum of $2,000,000, or so much of the sum as may be necessary, to the department of transportation for the purpose of providing grants to nonfixed route public transportation providers, for the biennium beginning July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2027.

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE
HB 1106

Transportation Committee (Rep. D. Ruby, Chairman) recommends **AMENDMENTS (25.0651.01001)** and when so amended, recommends **DO PASS** and **BE REREFERRED** to the **Appropriations Committee** (7 YEAS, 6 NAYS, 1 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). HB 1106 was placed on the Sixth order on the calendar.

2025 HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS

HB 1106

2025 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Appropriations Committee
Roughrider Room, State Capitol

HB 1106
2/10/2025

A BILL for an Act to provide an appropriation to the department of transportation for nonfixed route transit program grants.

4:47 p.m. Chairman Vigesaa called the meeting to order.

Members Present: Chairman Vigesaa, Vice Chairman Kempenich, Representatives Berg, Bosch, Brandenburg, Fisher, Hanson, Louser, Martinson, Meier, Monson, Murphy, Nathe, Nelson, O'Brien, Pyle, Richter, Sanford, Stemen, Swiontek, Wagner

Members Absent: Representatives Anderson, Mitskog

Discussion Topics:

- Transportation
- North Dakota ADA Residents
- Funding over Transportation

4:47 p.m. Representative D. Ruby introduced the Bill.

5:10 p.m. Representative Brandenburg moved a Do Pass.

5:10 p.m. Representative Meier seconded.

5:11 p.m. Roll Call Vote

Representatives	Vote
Representative Don Vigesaa	Y
Representative Keith Kempenich	Y
Representative Bert Anderson	A
Representative Mike Berg	Y
Representative Glen Bosch	N
Representative Mike Brandenburg	Y
Representative Jay Fisher	N
Representative Karla Rose Hanson	Y
Representative Scott Louser	A
Representative Bob Martinson	Y
Representative Lisa Meier	Y
Representative Alisa Mitskog	A
Representative David Monson	Y
Representative Eric J. Murphy	Y
Representative Mike Nathe	Y
Representative Jon O. Nelson	Y
Representative Emily O'Brien	Y

Representative Brandy L. Pyle	Y
Representative David Richter	Y
Representative Mark Sanford	Y
Representative Gregory Stemen	N
Representative Steve Swiontek	Y
Representative Scott Wagner	Y

5:11 p.m. Motion passed 17-3-3.

5:11 p.m. Representative Johnston will carry the Bill.

5:11 p.m. Chairman Vigesaa closed the meeting.

Sierra Schartz, Committee Clerk

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE
ENGROSSED HB 1106 (25.0651.02000)

Appropriations Committee (Rep. Vigesaa, Chairman) recommends **DO PASS** (17 YEAS, 3 NAYS, 3 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). HB 1106 was placed on the Eleventh order on the calendar.

2025 SENATE TRANSPORTATION

HB 1106

2025 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Transportation Committee
Fort Totten Room, State Capitol

HB 1106
3/20/2025

A BILL for an Act to provide an appropriation to the department of transportation for nonfixed route transit program grants.

10:38 a.m. Chairman Clemens opened the hearing.

Members present: Chairman Clemens, Vice Chairwoman Cory, Senator Hogan, Senator Klein, Senator Paulson, Senator Rummel

Discussion Topics:

- Defining a nonfixed route
- Cost of creating transportation services

10:38 a.m. Representative Monson, District 19, introduced HB 1106 and testified in favor.

10:47 a.m. Brian Barrett, Lobbyist, North Dakota Towing Association, introduced Pat Hansen, Executive Director, South Central Adult Service Valley City.

10:47 a.m. Pat Hansen, Executive Director, South Central Adult Service Valley City, testified in favor and submitted testimony #43262.

11:06 a.m. Micha Olson, Attorney, North Dakota Protection and Advocacy Project, testified in favor and submitted testimony #41586.

11:12 a.m. Kristen Dvorak, Executive Director, The ARC of North Dakota, testified in favor and submitted testimony #43116.

11:13 a.m. Kory Peterson, Advocate, ND League of Cities, testified in favor and submitted testimony #43171.

11:14 a.m. Chairman Clemens closed the hearing.

11:15 a.m. Senator Klein moved a Do Pass and to be Rereferred to Appropriations.

11:15 a.m. Senator Rummel seconded the motion.

Senators	Vote
Senator David A. Clemens	Y
Senator Claire Cory	Y
Senator Kathy Hogan	Y
Senator Jerry Klein	Y
Senator Bob Paulson	Y
Senator Dean Rummel	Y

Motion passed 6-0-0.

Senator Klein will carry the bill.

Additional written testimony:

Zoe Absey submitted written testimony #42927.

Faye Seilder submitted written testimony #43194.

11:15 a.m. Chairman Clemens closed the hearing.

Chance Anderson, Committee Clerk

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE
ENGROSSED HB 1106 (25.0651.02000)

Transportation Committee (Sen. Clemens, Chairman) recommends **DO PASS** and **BE REREFERRED** to the **Appropriations Committee** (6 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT OR EXCUSED AND NOT VOTING). HB 1106 was rereferred to the **Appropriations Committee**. This bill does not affect workforce development.

Protection & Advocacy Project
400 E. Broadway, Suite 409
Bismarck, ND 58501
701-328-2950
1-800-472-2670
TTY: 711
www.ndpanda.org

Senate Transportation Committee
House Bill 1106 - March 20, 2025
Testimony of Micah Olson, P&A Position-In Support

My name is Micah Olson. I am attorney at Protection & Advocacy. I am speaking today in favor of House Bill 1106, a bill to provide an appropriation to the department of transportation for nonfixed route transit program grants.

In my work, I have frequently interacted with individuals who rely on both fixed route public transportation and paratransit. Prior to working at Protection & Advocacy, I worked as an Independent Living Advocate in Minot. Through my work, I have become familiar with fixed route transportation and paratransit in Bismarck, Mandan, and Minot.

I have interacted with many individuals who rely on public transportation, using fixed-route transit, paratransit, or sometimes both. While fixed route transportation works well for many people, it has limitations and may not be a viable option for many individuals, particularly those who require public transportation due to a disability. Disabled individuals often prefer paratransit because it provides door-to-door service. Paratransit may be the only option for some individuals, as they may not live on a fixed bus route or in a rural area that provides no other public transportation. Paratransit has longer hours of operation than fixed route transportation, including weekend hours. This gives individuals greater opportunity to get to and from work, run errands, and participate in evening and weekend activities. Paratransit makes it more possible for disabled individuals to participate in their communities.

Even if other forms of transportation are available, such as taxis or rideshare services, these options are often not viable for those who would qualify for paratransit. Although a taxi may be accessible, it is costly, and would not be affordable to many individuals, particularly those who regularly need public transportation. Rideshare services such as Uber and Lyft would not be feasible options for many people for several reasons. Individuals who do not have a phone may not be able to utilize the application, it may not be affordable, and it is unlikely the vehicle could accommodate a wheelchair or other mobility devices. Because alternatives to paratransit are not feasible, it is the only option for many people.

Although paratransit provides a valuable service, paratransit user report difficulties with scheduling. Sometimes work hours did not align with paratransit's schedule. Paratransit users might arrive to work very early or late. Sometimes they have to leave work early if paratransit arrives early. Individuals also report not being able to schedule rides on the weekends, even if they attempt to schedule far in advance. Paratransit also does not allow for sudden or spontaneous trips. This affects an individual's ability to socialize and participate in community activities.

Increased funding could assist in correcting some of paratransit's limitations. This would make our state more accessible and allow all individuals to fully participate in their communities.

P&A supports at Do Pass recommendation on House Bill 1106.

Chair Clemens and Members of the Transportation Committee,

My name is Zoe Absey and I am here today in strong support of House Bill 1106, which allocates $2 million for transportation grants across North Dakota. Transportation is one of the biggest barriers preventing our neighbors from accessing their most basic needs, and this investment is critical for the well-being of communities across our state.

During my time at the Great Plains Food Bank, I saw firsthand how transportation challenges impact access to food, particularly in rural communities. Many individuals rely on friends, carpooling, or the very limited transportation options available just to get groceries, attend medical appointments, or go to work. Without reliable transportation, too many North Dakotans are left struggling to meet their daily needs.

Expanding transportation options will strengthen our communities, improve economic stability, and promote health and well-being by ensuring that more people can access essential services. This funding is a step toward making transportation more accessible and equitable, allowing local communities to build solutions that work for their residents.

I urge you to support HB 1106 and invest in a stronger, more connected North Dakota. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Zoe Absey

The Arc
North Dakota

House Transportation

HB 1106

March 20, 2025

I am Kirsten Dvorak, the Executive Director of The Arc of North Dakota. The Arc of North Dakota is the oldest non-profit organization advocating for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) across the state. We appreciate the chance to express our support for House Bill No. 1106, which proposes an appropriation of $2,000,000 to the Department of Transportation for transit program grants during the biennium.

Access to dependable and affordable public transportation is crucial for individuals with IDD. It directly affects their ability to engage fully in community life, obtain employment opportunities, participate in educational programs, and access necessary healthcare services. Many individuals experience isolation and significant limitations on their independence without sufficient transportation options.

House Bill No. 1106 addresses these urgent needs by allocating funds to improve public transportation services throughout North Dakota. The significance of this investment is further emphasized by findings presented by the Upper Great Plains Transportation Institute during the December meeting of Government Services:

- **Population Impact:** North Dakota is home to approximately 96,378 individuals with disabilities, with an estimated 23% relying on specialized transportation to travel outside their homes.
- **Service Limitations:** Funding shortages have reduced coverage areas, restricted operating hours, and increased wait times. For example, during the 2023 Christmas holiday, transit services in Bismarck operated only from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., while services in Fargo and Grand Forks were closed entirely.
- **Disability Status:** Approximately 49% of rural transit riders and 52% of urban transit riders identify as having a disability.

These statistics illustrate the critical role that public transportation plays in the lives of North Dakota residents, particularly for older adults, individuals with disabilities, low-income households, and those without access to personal vehicles. By allocating $2,000,000 to the Department of Transportation for transit program grants, House Bill No. 1106 will:

- Expand service coverage to underserved areas.
- Enhance accessibility for individuals with disabilities.
- Empower residents to participate more fully in employment, education, healthcare, and community activities.

Supporting this bill represents a significant step toward fostering inclusivity, equity, and mobility for all North Dakotans. We urge the legislature to approve this funding to help remove transportation barriers and improve the quality of life for our most vulnerable residents.
Thank you for considering our perspective on this important matter.

Kirsten Dvorak

701-222-1854

NORTH DAKOTA LEAGUE OF CITIES

March 20, 2025
Senate Transportation
HB 1106
David Clemens, Chair

For the record, my name is Kory Peterson. I am appearing before you today on behalf of the North Dakota League of Cities, in support of HB 1106. Prior to working with the North Dakota League of Cities, I was the Mayor of Horace for 8 years, from June 2016 to July 2024.

Nonfixed route public transportation providers are a valuable resource used by many people who have mobility issues. Having this service allows individuals more freedom to go to work, make various appointments, and allows them to have a better quality of life.

As you are all aware, costs have gone on everything and the companies providing these services are no different. The cost of vehicles, maintenance, and staffing have gone up dramatically in the past 5 years.

Having worked with the Horace Lions Club, I got exposed to an organization called Handi-Wheels, which operates in the Fargo metro area. This organization provides transportation to mobility challenged individuals throughout the metro area. This service is invaluable to those needing this type of help. The club would contribute to this group because it is a needed service, and I have observed the good work they do.

This legislation would help provide another funding avenue for these types of organization to help continue their work in their different communities. This funding would help offset the cost increases while keeping the price for transportation affordable.

The League recommends a Do Pass on HB 1106.

Thank you.

Kory Peterson

Senate Transportation Committee
March 20th, 2025 HB 1106
Testimony in Support

Dear Chair Clemens and the members of the Senate Transportation Committee,

I urge a “Do Pass” on HB 1106.

I do not drive and I will not drive within my life because of a traumatic car accident I experienced when I was younger. I depend on public transport to maneuver across both the city I live and our state at large. I’ll be coming to the capitol on March 24th to testify, only because the Greyhound bus has daily trips and it wasn’t any problem to book just four days out.

I am submitting testimony only to make the point not everyone drives nor can drive. While for me it’s related to trauma, I know a couple that used to have two cars, but couldn’t afford to replace one when it broke down. Now they trade off where it makes sense and use the bus when it doesn’t.

With the increased cost of pretty much everything in our life and less opportunities for people to get ahead, public transportation is likely to become more necessary over the next ten years. It is a public good and an enormous benefit to not just those who need to take the bus, but for our businesses to assure their workers can get to work.

Any way that we can support public transportation, I am behind. Please, give this a “Do Pass!”

Thank you for your time, consideration, and service to our state,
Faye Seidler

Testimony
House Bill 1106 – Department of Transportation
State Aid for Public Transit Budget
Senate Transportation Committee
March 20, 2025

Chairman Clemens and members of the committee, my name is Pat Hansen. I am the executive director of South Central Adult Services in Valley City. I am also a member of the North Dakota Senior Service Providers and Dakota Transit Association. I am testifying in support of HB 1106 which would add $2,000,000 to the State Aid for Public Transit fund for the next biennium.

The State Aid for Public Transit funding we receive is used to match federal dollars for operating transit services and as local match for purchasing vehicles for use in public transit. If we do not receive adequate state funding for match, we may be unable to access all of the federal dollars we are appropriated.

South Central Adult Services provides the same service in the very rural areas of North Dakota that are available in the larger cities. In the very rural counties we serve, which include LaMoure, Foster, Logan, McIntosh, Griggs, Emmons and Nelson South Central provided 53,125 rides this past fiscal year. Barnes County (which is our "urban" county) provided 59,804 rides. This is a 9% increase over our last fiscal year. Local service is provided to communities within the counties, and transit is available from the southwestern counties to Bismarck 5 days per week, to Jamestown 3 days per week, from our eastern counties to Fargo 5 days per week and to Grand Forks 5 days per week. We are transporting dialysis patients from Strasberg, Linton, Wishek, Ashley, McVille, Lakota, Carrington and Valley City on a

regular basis. We have made many trips to Fargo and Bismarck with patients for radiation treatments and chemotherapy in the last few months.

That is only the tip of the iceberg. We provide rides for local medical appointments, rides to work, school, daycare, Head Start, and many rides for local grocery shopping, hair appointments, rides to senior centers and rides for nursing homes and assisted living facilities. We currently have 32 full-time and 46 part-time transit employees. The cost of personnel has increased dramatically over the past few years. We have had to increase wages in order to compete with other employers in our area and have increased hours to keep up with the demand for services. This problem has increased since the pandemic. Even taking the impact on the residents of our counties out of the picture, if we do not receive adequate funding, the staff reductions in these rural counties would be devastating to our employees and to the small rural communities where there are very few jobs available.

Last fiscal year, even with the increase in State Aid, we had to use $462,808 (over 20% of our operating budget) in local dollars to meet expenses. That amount of local funding cannot be sustained long term. This concerns me on several levels as many of the people we serve do not have other options for transportation. Some of our rural riders would be forced to move to locations where medical services such as dialysis and cancer treatments are available. A large percentage of them would need long term care and are low-income. Many of the people we serve do not have vehicles. As one of our riders told me today, "I would be totally isolated without your service."

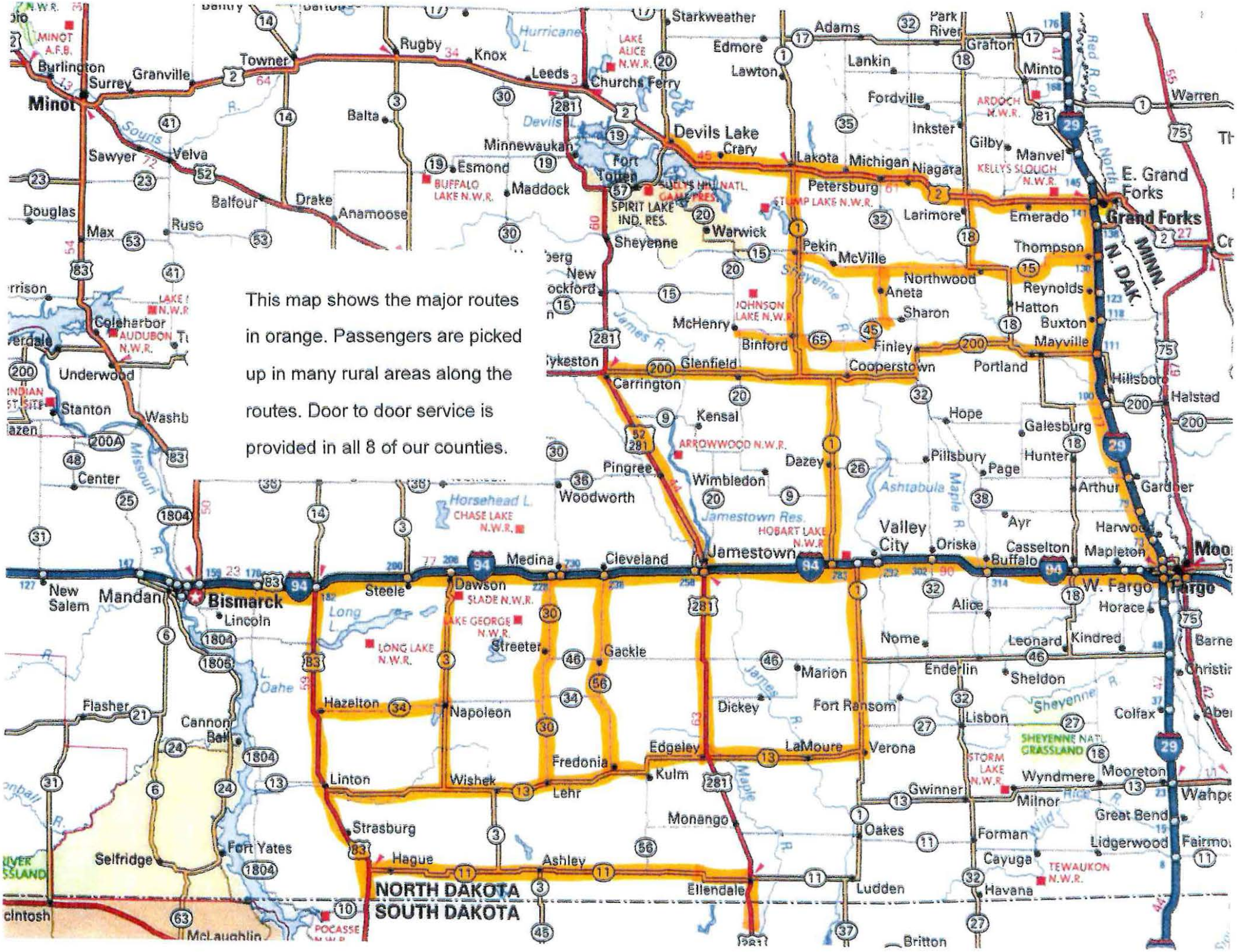
While many of North Dakota's rural public transit agencies provide much needed transportation to those already living here, our public transit services also play a role in drawing new people to our state. Many of those considering re-locating to North Dakota from other states, come from large cities and urban areas where public transit is their main mode of transportation. A large number do not even own a vehicle. Access to public transportation, especially in rural communities, can be a determining factor in their decision making process. We believe that safe, reliable and sustainable public transportation is an integral piece of the puzzle when it comes to continued growth in North Dakota.

On a positive note, we have received many new vehicles in the past year. Many had been on back order for two or more years. This is a benefit to us as it will help decrease the amount dollars spent on repairs. It also provides much safer transportation for passengers. I would like to thank the legislators for the increased funding this biennium, and the North Dakota Department of Transportation for their continued support of our agency. We are very fortunate to have the great staff we have in the Department.

Transit providers would like to see us get back to a minimum of $12 million next biennium. This would ease some of the demand on local funding.

I have attached a map of our coverage area and fares for your information.

Thank you for your consideration. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.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Bismarck
Mandan
Jamestown
Valley City
Grand Forks
E. Grand Forks
Devils Lake
Dickinson
Williston
Fargo
W. Fargo
NORTH DAKOTA
SOUTH DAKOTA

Reviewed 12/11/24

Following are the service routes & schedules currently being provided by South Central Adult Services.

Barnes County Schedule

Valley City - Demand/Response: Monday - Friday - $2.00/ride
8:00am - 5:00pm
Saturday & Sunday
8:00am - 2:00pm
Valley City to Jamestown: Monday, Wednesday and Friday - $5.00 round trip
Oriska, Fingal, Nome, Kathryn, Litchville, Hastings: 1st & 3rd Friday each month - $5.00 round trip
Sanborn, Rogers, Leal, Wimbledon, Dazey: 2nd & 4th Wednesday of each month - $5.00 round trip
Valley City to Fargo: Monday – Friday as needed - $10.00 round trip – will stop in Tower City, Buffalo and Casselton as requested. Jamestown to Fargo $25.00 round trip.
Taxi operates in Valley City 24 hours per day, 7 days per week – Metered – Second Taxi to run on weekends.

LaMoure County Schedule

LaMoure to Jamestown & Valley City: every Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday - $10.00 round trip
LaMoure to Fargo: Every Thursday - $18.00 round trip
LaMoure to Bismarck: Monday – Friday on McIntosh County vehicles - $18.00 round trip
LaMoure to Oakes upon request - $8.00 round trip
LaMoure to Aberdeen, Ashley and Wishek upon request - $10.00 round trip
LaMoure City: Monday - Friday – $2.00 round trip

Logan County Schedule

Within Napoleon: Monday – Friday - $1.00 round trip
To Bismarck: Monday - Friday - $10.00 round trip western county/$13 round trip eastern county
To Jamestown: every Thursday - $10.00 round trip eastern county/$13.00 round trip western county – stops in Streeter as requested
To Wishek and Linton: Monday - Friday upon request- $8.00 round trip
To Aberdeen: 1st, 3rd and last Tuesday - $13.00 round trip

McIntosh County Schedule

Within Ashley: Monday - Friday - $1.00/ride
Within Wishek: every Monday - Friday - $1.00/ride
Wishek/Ashley/Zeeland/Lehr to Bismarck: Monday - Friday - $15.00 round trip
Wishek to Jamestown: every Thursday - $13.00 round trip
Between Zeeland & Ashley: Upon request - $5.00 round trip
Shuttle to Kulm for Jamestown & Fargo connections: every Thursday - 25.00
To Aberdeen: 1st, 3rd & last Tuesday each month - $13.00 round trip

Griggs County Schedule

To Fargo: every Thursday - $10.00 round trip
To Valley City: 2nd Tuesday of each month - $8.00 round trip
To Grand Forks, Mayville, Hillsboro: 4th Tuesday - $10.00 round trip
Within Cooperstown: Monday thru Friday - $1.00/ride
Cooperstown/Binford/Sutton: upon request - $3.00 round trip
Cooperstown/Hannaford: upon request - $3.00 round trip
To Jamestown: 1st & 3rd Tuesday - $8.00 round trip – stops in Glenfield as requested

Foster County Schedule

Within Carrington: Monday thru Friday - $1.00/ride
To Fargo: 1st Wednesday & 3rd Tuesday of each month - $15.00 round trip
To Bismarck: 3rd Wednesday of each month - $15.00 round trip
Rural Foster County: 2nd Wednesday and 1st, 3rd & 4th Fridays of each month - $5.00 round trip
To Jamestown: 1st, 2nd & 4th Tuesday, 4th Wednesday and every Thursday of each month - $8.00 round trip
To New Rockford: Every Monday, upon request - $5.00 round trip

Emmons County Schedule

Within Linton: Monday - Friday - $1.00/ride
To Wishek – As requested - $8.00 round trip

To Bismarck: Monday - Friday - $10.00 round trip northern county/$13.00 round trip southern county
Rural Emmons County to Linton: Monday – Friday as requested - $5.00 round trip
To Fargo: Thursday - $25.00 round trip
To Jamestown: every Thursday, $15.00 round trip
Rural Emmons County to Linton: Monday – Friday as requested - $5.00 round trip
Within Strasburg, Hague and Hazelton – Monday – Friday - $1.00 per ride

Nelson County Schedule

Lakota to Grand Forks: Monday, Wednesday, Friday - $10.00 round trip (stops in Michigan, Petersburg, Larimore and Emerado as requested
Devils Lake to Grand Forks: As needed - $10.00 round trip
Within Nelson County: $1.00
Aneta/McVille to Grand Forks: As needed - $10.00 round trip
Aneta/McVille to Devils Lake & Lakota: As needed - $5.00 round trip

Shuttles are available from anywhere in Logan, McIntosh and Emmons counties Monday through Friday to meet the scheduled Bismarck vehicles so that service is available to Bismarck five days per week.

Free rides may be provided through referral from Social Services. They are to be negotiated as a need arises. South Central Adult Services does not have discounted fares.

I thank you for your consideration of HB 1106. I apologize for not being at the hearing last week. It is much easier to answer questions in person than through an email, but I will attempt to answer some of the questions asked by Representative Koppelman.

In response to questions from Representative Koppelman:

1. Reasons why those who are not elderly and disabled use transit:
   The Federal Transit Administration requires that to receive funding for operations, rides must be available and open to the general public. Their preference is that at least 50% of the rides are for the general public. South Central has met this goal for several years. Riders under age 60 use the service for many things including rides to work, rides for children to school and daycare, shopping, personal errands, etc. Many of them do not have vehicles of their own or they are unable to take off work to transport their kids.

2. Do you see people using transit just because it's cheaper than using their own car?
   We do not generally ask people why they are riding. We have had some state that it is cheaper than owning and operating their own vehicle. Some of them, for example traveling nurses, come from other parts of the country and do not want to drive here. They usually fly to Fargo or Bismarck and use our service to get to and from their work.

3. Reason for excess $460,000 in local funds last year:
   It has been difficult to project ridership since Covid. Last year we provided 10,000 additional rides from the prior year. We also did not apply for an adequate amount of federal dollars because we did not foresee this large increase. Federal funds will pay for 50% of operating and 80% of administrative costs after fare income is deducted. These funds must be matched with State or local funds. I am attaching a copy of our fares and services by county for your information. The amount we are charging is approximately 10-11% of the cost of service which is encouraged by the FTA. I believe this is one of the factors they consider when funding our program. We make every attempt to look at each county's demographics and distances per trip when determining fares.

4. Thoughts on increasing fares and using a voucher system for elderly and disabled:
   We do not require a means test for passengers so in many cases we don't know what their financial situation is. For the very low-income, those who are on Medicaid or Expanded Medicaid, we bill their fare to Medicaid. Unless it is an unscheduled or special need request we are not allowed to bill Medicaid for more than the regular fare. In order to set up a voucher system and to do intakes on the hundreds of people receiving rides throughout the state it would almost require a whole new department to oversee it. It is also doubtful that FTA would approve it.

2025 SENATE APPROPRIATIONS

HB 1106

2025 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Appropriations - Government Operations Division
Red River Room, State Capitol

HB 1106
3/26/2025

A BILL for an Act to provide an appropriation to the department of transportation for nonfixed route transit program grants.

2:47 p.m. Chairman Wanzek opened the hearing.

Members present: Chairman Wanzek, Vice-Chair Dwyer, Senator Burckhard, Senator Erbele, and Senator Sickler.

Discussion Topics:

- Increasing ridership
- Local contributions
- Compliance with Federal funding guidelines
- Source of vehicles used
- Non-fixed route - on-demand service
- Criteria for state aid and Federal aid for this service agency
- Medical needs prioritized
- ND Department of Transportation (DOT) cooperation

2:48 p.m. Pat Hansen, Executive Director, South Central Adult Services in Valley City, testified in favor, answered and submitted testimony #44197.

3:22 p.m. Brady Larson, Assistant Legislative Budget Analyst, supplied budget information.

3:23 p.m. Chad Orn, Deputy Director for Planning, ND DOT, answered committee questions.

3:28 p.m. Senator Erbele moved a Do Pass for HB 1106.

3:28 p.m. Senator Dwyer seconded the motion.

Senators	Vote
Senator Terry M. Wanzek	Y
Senator Randy A. Burckhard	Y
Senator Michael Dwyer	Y
Senator Robert Erbele	Y
Senator Jonathan Sickler	Y

Motion passed 5-0-0.

Senator Burckhard will carry this bill.

Additional written testimony:
Alex Kizima, Fargo resident who uses the bus, submitted testimony #44176 in favor.

3:32 p.m. Chairman Wanzek closed the hearing.

Carol Thompson, Committee Clerk

I support this bill! I hope it passes

Alex Kizima
Fargo resident who uses the bus.

Testimony
House Bill 1106 – Department of Transportation
State Aid for Public Transit Budget
Senate Appropriations – Government Operations
March 26, 2025

Chairman Wanzek and members of the committee, my name is Pat Hansen. I am the executive director of South Central Adult Services in Valley City. I am also a member of the North Dakota Senior Service Providers and Dakota Transit Association. I am testifying in support of HB 1106 which would add $2,000,000 to the State Aid for Public Transit fund for the next biennium.

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Last fiscal year, even with the increase in State Aid, we had to use $462,808 (over 20% of our operating budget) in local dollars to meet expenses. That amount of local funding cannot be sustained long term. This concerns me on several levels as many of the people we serve do not have other options for transportation. Some of our rural riders would be forced to move to locations where medical services such as dialysis and cancer treatments are available. A large percentage of them would need long term care and are low-income. Many of the people we serve do not have vehicles. As one of our riders told me today, “I would be totally isolated without your service.”

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On a positive note, we have received many new vehicles in the past year. Many had been on back order for two or more years. This is a benefit to us as it will help decrease the amount dollars spent on repairs. It also provides much safer transportation for passengers. I would like to thank the legislators for the increased funding this biennium, and the North Dakota Department of Transportation for their continued support of our agency. We are very fortunate to have the great staff we have in the Department.

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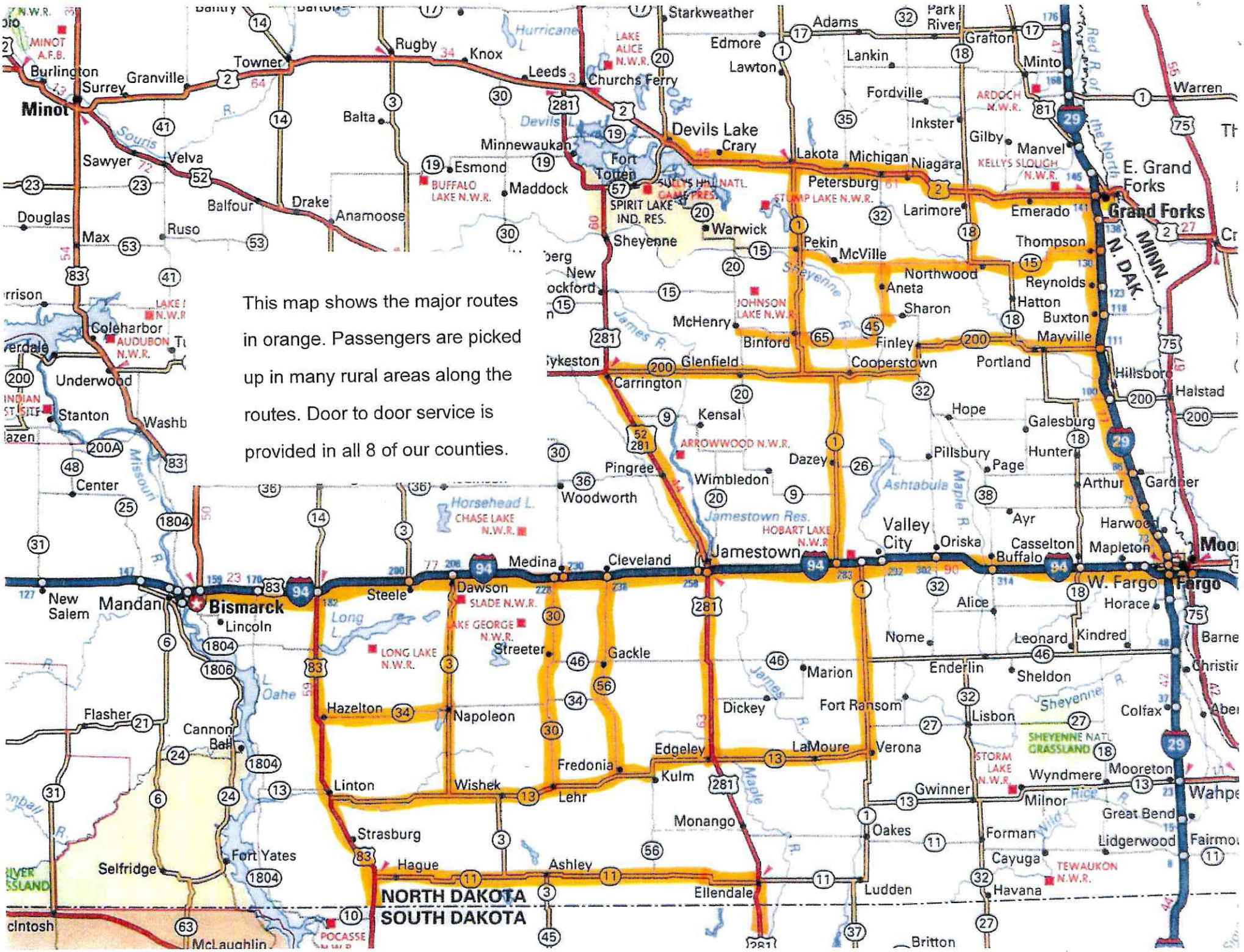
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N. DAK.
MINN.

Reviewed 12/22/24

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LaMoure to Oakes upon request - $8.00 round trip

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LaMoure City: Monday - Friday – $2.00 round trip

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To Jamestown: 1st & 3rd Tuesday - $8.00 round trip – stops in Glenfield as requested

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To New Rockford: Every Monday, upon request - $5.00 round trip

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2025 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Appropriations Committee
Harvest Room, State Capitol

HB 1106
3/28/2025

A BILL for an Act to provide an appropriation to the department of transportation for nonfixed route transit program grants.

9:34 a.m. Vice-Chairman Erbele opened the hearing.

Members Present: Vice-Chairman Erbele, and Senators Burckhard, Cleary, Conley, Davison, Dever, Dwyer, Magrum, Mathern, Meyer, Schaible, Sickler, Sorvaag, Thomas, Wanzek.
Members Absent: Chairman Bekkedahl.

Discussion Topics:

- Bus Locations
- Qualifications to Use the Bus
- Cost Restrictions

9:34 a.m. Senator Burckhard introduced the bill.

9:35 a.m. Senator Burckhard moved a Do Pass.

9:35 a.m. Senator Conley seconded the motion.

Senators	Vote
Senator Brad Bekkedahl	A
Senator Robert Erbele	Y
Senator Randy A. Burckhard	Y
Senator Sean Cleary	Y
Senator Cole Conley	Y
Senator Kyle Davison	Y
Senator Dick Dever	Y
Senator Michael Dwyer	Y
Senator Jeffery J. Magrum	Y
Senator Tim Mathern	Y
Senator Scott Meyer	Y
Senator Donald Schaible	Y
Senator Jonathan Sickler	Y
Senator Ronald Sorvaag	Y
Senator Paul J. Thomas	Y
Senator Terry M. Wanzek	Y

Motion Passed 15-0-1.

Senator Klein will carry the bill.

9:38 a.m. Vice-Chairman Erbele closed the hearing.

Elizabeth Reiten, Committee Clerk

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE
ENGROSSED HB 1106 (25.0651.02000)

Appropriations Committee (Sen. Bekkedahl, Chairman) recommends **DO PASS** (15 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 1 ABSENT OR EXCUSED AND NOT VOTING). HB 1106 was placed on the Fourteenth order on the calendar. This bill does not affect workforce development.