

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 2112 RELATING TO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION BRANCH OFFICE DUTIES

House Transportation Committee
Meeting Scheduled at 9:45 AM 3/11/2021.

Honorable Chairman Ruby & Members of the House Transportation Committee:

SB 2112 A BILL for an Act to amend and reenact section 39-02-03 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to department of transportation branch office duties.

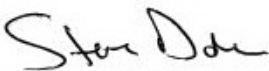
Currently the Department of Transportation has a contracted branch office providing motor vehicle administrative services in the City of Wahpeton five days per week. Driver's license services were previously hosted at a different location in the city two days per month, their already backlogged schedule was suspended during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The proposed bill will greatly enhance the level of service available to the south east region of North Dakota by providing the opportunity for a single contract location to offer motor vehicle and driver's license services up to five days per week. In the past we frequently had people travel 60 to 90 miles to come to Wahpeton, wait in line for 6+ hours and hope to renew their driver's license. Currently, a 16-year-old may have to wait up to 4 months to get an appointment in Fargo for their first driver's license exam. The wait time for commercial driver's license exams is a significant detriment to the freight industry that already has way more jobs than qualified applicants. The current motor vehicle office in Wahpeton provides an excellent level of service and would quickly adapt to add driver's license services to assist the residents of south east North Dakota.

It is an innovative and progressive solution presented in SB 2112 to build on a service delivery model that works very well. Expanded services in the Wahpeton Branch Office would quickly improve services to a tri-county area population of over 25,000 people playing an important role in the Department of Transportation's mission to safely move people and goods.

I strongly **SUPPORT** the proposed amendment to expand branch office duties to include motor vehicle and driver's license services.

Submitted with high regard on behalf of the City of Wahpeton.



Steve Dale, Mayor
City of Wahpeton