

Testimony to the House Transportation Committee on SB 2121
March 18, 2021
Testimony by Mary Korsmo
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(NDSACCHO)

Good morning, Chairman Ruby and members of the House Transportation Committee. My name is Mary Korsmo and I am the Executive Director for the North Dakota Association of City & County Health Officials. On behalf of all 28 local public health units which I represent, we support SB 2121.

Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of injury-related death in North Dakota (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention). The ND Department of Transportation reports that more people die in motor vehicle crashes in North Dakota from being unbelted than from other common contributing crash factors. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, seat belts among drivers and front-seat passengers reduce the risk of death and serious injury by 45 and 50 percent respectively. Unbelted motor vehicle crash deaths are preventable.

Proven data shows that seat belts save lives and money, yet it costs nothing to implement. A primary belt law will decrease motor vehicle crash deaths in North Dakota; your favorable consideration of SB 2121 is requested.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony. I'm happy to answer any questions or provide additional information as requested. Please feel free to contact me at 701.471.2264 or mary.korsmo@ndaco.org.