



McKenzie County Emergency Management

March 18, 2021

Chairman Ruby, House Transportation Committee:

My name is Karolin Jappe, I am not only the Emergency Manager in McKenzie County, but I also serve on the Alexander Volunteer Fire Department as well as our Departments Quick Response Unit. I come before you today in support of SB 2121. In the 7 years I have been in my position I have seen and witnessed a lot throughout McKenzie County in respects to crashes and fatalities.

I am supporting this bill for many reasons. I will start with helping you to understand what happens when a person is ejected from a vehicle. More often than not, it is the vehicle that actually kills the person. The vehicle usually rolls right over the person that gets ejected. If the person were in a seatbelt, the chances of getting ejected are very low and their life could be spared.

I have called on the Critical Incident Stress Debriefing Teams to come in numerous times for our first responders and have had the opportunity of being in on one of those meetings with our first responders. I have seen several responders speak not just of the crash in question but of past crashes that have never left their mind. This is one meeting I will never forget.

I truly believe in protecting public health and safety and I will tell you that I am not one to ask for any more regulations, but this one I will tell you, we need. We need to protect those that are there protecting us.

I have actually seen members from Law Enforcement, EMS and Fire quit due to the horrid crashes that they have had to witness. Recently I had to ask one of our Pastors to meet with one of our younger members of my Fire Department as well as two high school students who ended up first on scene to a two fatality crash.

It is not fair to the many first responders who have to pick up the pieces when people are ejected from vehicles and it is very hard when it's someone you know in your own community.

It's not always the case when you hear "when I wear my seatbelt, I'm only affecting myself". Vehicles can get out of control and when they do it can take the lives of other innocent people. Another words, other people can and will be affected by those who choose not to wear their seat belts.

It has been shown that States that have the seat belt law, have the majority of people choose to wear them because it is the law. It hurts to see people who lose their life, because of a simple seat belt that could have saved them.

I hope you give this serious consideration, and think about what truly happens to all of our first responders from law enforcement, fire, ems and those good Samaritans who always seem to stop at crashes as they know someone has got to be hurt. We can help everyone involved if we just pass this bill.

Thank you for your time,

Karolin Jappe

McKenzie County

Emergency Manager

201 5th Street NW

Watford City, ND 58854

Office: 701.444.7483

Cell: 701.580.6936