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Chairman Ruby and Members of the ND House Transportation Committee:

I'm writing in support of HB 1246 and I thank the legislators that have sponsored this legislation that is so important to safety in our community.

I am a school board member at Oakes Public School. The four-way traffic light with crosswalk signals is on the corner of ND Highway 1 and Oakes Main Avenue and **directly adjacent** to the two blocks that contain our elementary and high school. Nearly 500 students, preschool through grade 12, plus around 50 staff use those buildings daily during the school year.

This intersection is the gateway to our business district. Nearly everyone who shops, dines, banks, goes to the post office, gets a haircut, or attends a medical appointment in Oakes will drive through this intersection. These drivers include (naturally) our youngest and least experienced drivers who are coming to and going home from school and activities, as well as older residents whose reaction time may be a bit slower than it was in their younger years.

Our community is home to two large grain elevator companies and our area farmers also produce potatoes and onions. A great deal of ag truck traffic moves through this intersection, at harvest time and throughout the year. As one of those truck drivers, I greatly appreciate being able to see the traffic light from several blocks away coming from either direction to plan whether I will need to stop or just proceed with extraordinary caution near the school, particularly at the busy times just before and after school.

This traffic light has served us well in the many years it has been in place. I appreciate your support of HB 1246 so that we can keep the signal in place and continue to enhance safety for everyone in our community.

Kindest regards,



Sonia Meehl