

Good morning, Chairman Ruby and the Transportation Committee.

My name is Kari Newman Ness. I am President/CEO and one of the owners of Newman Signs Inc, Jamestown.

I appreciate the time to speak this morning in opposition to HB 1394.

This bill is designed to give businesses located near the interstate the opportunity to advertise on the state's right-of-way through the use of Logo Signage. **Item A** in your handout shows examples of logo signage. I feel very strongly the State of ND should NOT get into the advertising business; it should NOT compete against those of us in private business. There is only so much advertising money out there, it is split between newspaper, radio, Television, internet and outdoor advertising. I really hate to see the State in competition with all of us for these advertising dollars.

**Item B** in your handout shows examples of what we have in ND right now. These are called General Service Signs (more commonly Tourist Oriented Directional Signs TOD). They are located along the highways and are an easy visual.

Logo signage, because it's designed for businesses near highways is not available to all businesses. The logo program gives an unfair advantage to restaurants, hotels, gas stations, located near exits. There

are distance restrictions in the program so it's unlikely that any Downtown businesses would ever be featured on a logo sign.

Logo signage is designed to get people off the highway, quickly into a gas station or restaurant, back into their vehicles, down the road and out of our state. As you all know, there has been a concerted effort in the past 15 or so years to revitalize our downtowns, we want people to experience our cities beyond our exits.

The Fiscal note on HB 1394, I feel, underestimates the cost of a program like this. There will be engineering costs, the cost of the actual structures, survey work, maintenance costs, cost to remove existing signs so spacing requirements can be met, and cost to develop and monitor the program.

Logo Signs will not enhance a visitor's stay in ND. We are not BACKWARD because we don't have them when other states do. We don't need them, we have TOD signs.

I hope you will agree the State of ND should NOT be in competition with those of us in business here in ND. This is not a business-friendly bill, it favors the STATE and companies with well-known logos located near the interstate exits.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. I strongly urge a DO NOT PASS on HB 1394.

I would be happy to yield to questions.