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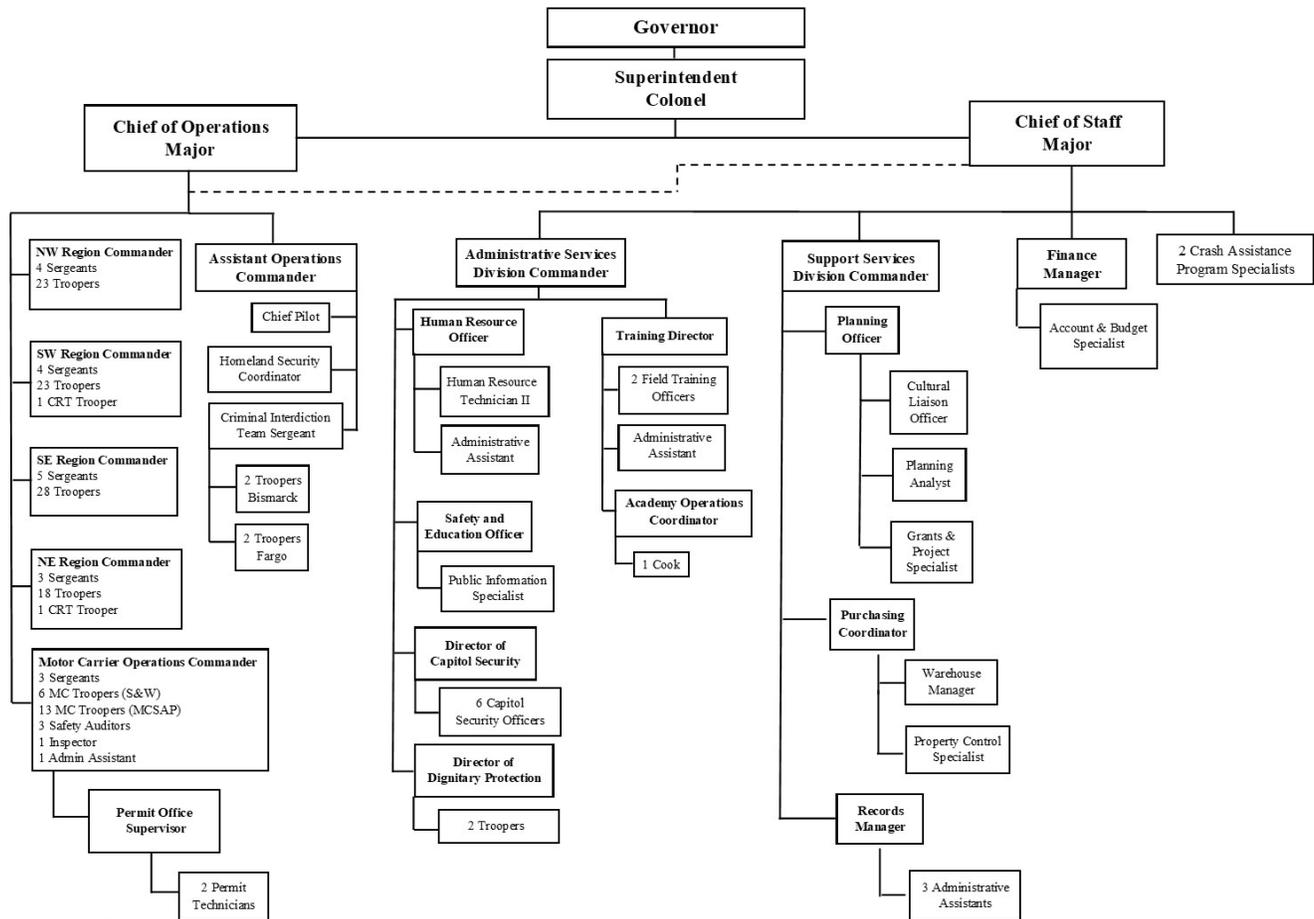
Colonel Daniel Haugen, Superintendent

Introduction

Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman and members of the House Government Operations Division. My name is Daniel Haugen, and I proudly serve as the recently appointed 18th superintendent of the North Dakota Highway Patrol.

The North Dakota Highway Patrol was founded 90 years ago in 1935, and the agency's primary statutory authority and responsibility comes from North Dakota Century Code Chapter 39-03. The highway patrol is comprised of two major components: field operations and administration.

NORTH DAKOTA HIGHWAY PATROL ORGANIZATION CHART



The field operations side consists of four geographical regions and our motor carrier operations. The administration component consists of the administrative services division (human resources & training academy), and the support services division (equipment). The highway patrol has 171 sworn troopers and 34 civilian support staff.

Our emphasis as an agency has been on public safety through education and enforcement activities. Educating motorists to make the right decision is preferred over having to take enforcement action, but enforcing traffic and criminal laws remains our primary function. Educating the public and trying to prevent crashes and traffic violations from ever occurring is a continual cycle. Every day that the department of transportation is open, a batch of new drivers hit the road. If troopers are called to a crash or make a traffic stop, then it's too late – a violation already occurred – so we continue to explore ways to dedicate more time and energy to prevention efforts.

The highway patrol's primary focus was traffic safety for these 90 years. Today there continues to be three major contributing factors to serious injury and fatality crashes. Those are speeding, not wearing a seatbelt, and driving impaired. If we could eliminate those three violations, we'd save a lot of lives.

Speeding alone is a contributing factor in approximately ¼ of all fatality crashes, but it's such a common violation that many don't recognize the true danger of it. Distracted driving continues to be an issue as well, but it's a more difficult violation to identify, especially after a crash occurs.

The highway patrol's tireless efforts to reduce crashes and unnecessary injuries and deaths on our roadways has been the agency's goal since 1935. In addition to traffic safety, the highway patrol assists other law enforcement agencies with emergencies and calls for service, especially when resources are limited. Many law enforcement agencies in North Dakota are smaller, we all need to work together and help each other out regardless of the color of their uniform.

North Dakota has the opportunity to become the safest state in the nation. Most of us who reside here feel safe in our communities, and it's one of the reasons people choose to live in North Dakota. Maintaining a sense of safety wouldn't be possible without solid partnerships between federal, state, tribal, and local law enforcement agencies, and the highway patrol is grateful for all the first responders and dispatchers who work toward a common goal of providing public safety.

The highway patrol’s mission is to make a difference every day by providing high quality law enforcement services to keep North Dakota safe and secure. If you were to ask our employees for one word that summarizes the agency, many of them would say professionalism. Our past and present employees are respected in their communities, and we are fortunate to have strong public support. We’re committed to enhancing that public trust by being transparent and continually searching for opportunities to strengthen our relationships with stakeholders even further.

The citizens of North Dakota count on our employees to be responsive and proactive. Our employees enforce traffic laws, investigate crashes, provide safety presentations, help stranded motorists, and assist other agencies and community members during times of crisis. Our employees take pride in performing their duties and serving the citizens of this great state. Our officers are proud to wear the uniform of a North Dakota state trooper, and I appreciate the courage and commitment displayed by our entire team.

Audit Findings

We are happy to report that we had no findings in our most recent audit ending June 30, 2022. All recommendations from the previous audit were implemented.

Current Biennium Accomplishments

Criminal Interdiction Team Successes – Our department expanded the Criminal Interdiction Team from five to nine members. We currently have teams covering US-2, I-94, and I-29 to slow the transportation of illicit narcotics to and through our state.

	2023	2024
Fentanyl	11.3 lbs	15.4 lbs
Marijuana	133.34 lbs	1,199.5 lbs
THC	3.7 lbs	86 lbs
Methamphetamine	1.4 lbs	30.5 lbs
Cocaine	1.7 lbs	18 lbs
Psilocybin	1.1 lbs	14 lbs

Reduction in Fatal Crashes - Our department continues its focus with emphasis on speed, seat belt usage, right of way, DUI, criminal interdiction, motor carrier enforcement, distracted driving, and education efforts.

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Fatal Crashes	100	101	98	106	90

The highway patrol covered 45% of all serious injury and 84% of all fatal crashes throughout the state in 2024. Our troopers reconstructed 241 serious injury or fatal crashes and filed 142 criminal charges. Our civilian Crash Assistance Program employees provided 675 services to insurance companies, court system, crash victims and their families this current biennium.

Tracking & Search Efforts - Our department’s Emergency Response Team has evolved over the years from specializing just in crowd management to also search and rescues. The troopers on the team are professionally trained in tracking. The team composes of troopers, three bloodhound teams and our aircraft with FLIR capabilities. Our three, Man-Trailing (Bloodhound) Teams remained very active these past two years. In 2023, we conducted 46 searches and in 2024, we conducted 59 searches. These operations ranged from missing person searches to fugitive manhunts.

Law Enforcement Training Academy Modernization Project - The highway patrol is given statutory responsibility to manage the state’s law enforcement training center. It is responsible for not only basic academy training but also continuing education throughout the year. Since it was built in 1971, the building presented many challenges during the remodel. The hidden plumbing system within the floor and walls was in worse condition than expected and a good amount of funding was used for the abatement of an unexpected large amount of asbestos within the floors and ceilings. The building has been transformed into a modern facility that will allow us to continue to provide a service to the local political subdivisions. The \$3,000,000 received came from the Federal and State Fiscal Recovery Fund. The project started in early 2023 and was completed this past fall.

The Implementation of Blackboard online learning management system within the Law Enforcement Training Academy was completed. This program is the gold standard within the university system nationwide. This will greatly enhance the quantity and quality of the instruction we provide to law enforcement agencies. With the use of this program and others, agencies will be able to receive more of their continuing education online without the expense of traveling to Bismarck. This saves them salary, mileage, and hotel costs. In 2024, the academy served approximately 1,400 law enforcement officers from 92 different law enforcement agencies, directly impacting the services they provide.

Combined Agency Aircraft Details - Our department's aircraft was called into service for locating missing persons, fugitive searches, vehicle pursuits, and overwatch for narcotic operations. The plane was called out 37 times in 2023 and 35 times in 2024. Our agency has benefited from the use of our different planes over many decades. While in the past, we were limited by the technology we had, today we are relied upon for our capability of professional searches and tracking. With the use of our forward-looking infrared camera system and operator, we were able to partner with local law enforcement agencies to assist them in with enforcement operations within their communities. During this current biennium, the highway patrol partnered with both Bismarck and Fargo Police Departments for targeted traffic enforcement. In October, the NDHP and Fargo Police Department partnered to address unsafe driving behaviors within the city of Fargo.

The operation yielded 14 impaired drivers removed from the roadway and a fleeing motorcycle was tracked safely from the sky to where the suspect stopped and subsequently arrested. The motorcycle had been driving over 100 mph in a 30-mph zone.

The agency worked alongside other first responders during the October 2024 wildfires in northwest North Dakota. We assisted residents in the evacuation from their homes, rescuing stranded individuals, traffic control, administered lifesaving medical aid and provided mapping services with the use of our aircraft and (Forward Looking Infrared Radar) FLIR camera system. Our plane was able to map active hotspots to guide local firefighting efforts.

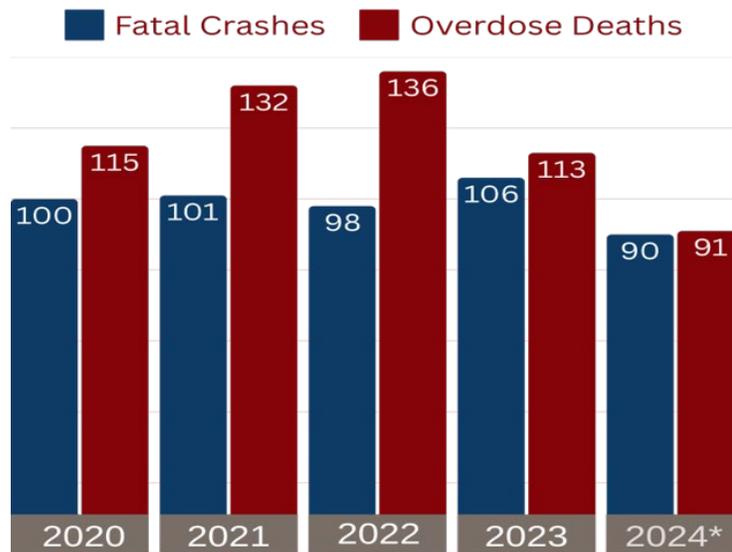
Continued mental health efforts and enhancements - Our agency expanded mental health outreach for law enforcement. We are involved in a clinical mental health network project with the North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services (NDDHHS) which expanded to all law enforcement statewide. The partnership has also helped to make clinical services available at Critical Incident Stress Management Debriefings. For example, these clinicians will be part of a team that will provide critical incident stress management services to law enforcement and first responders involved in the recent multiple homicide incident in the Spirit Lake area. We've enhanced the highway patrol's Critical Incident Stress Management team to provide continued peer services to troopers and partner agencies upon request. Our team has provided much needed peer to peer critical stress management both internally and external to the agency to other law enforcement dealing with critical incidents such as officer involved shootings. Recently, we've also partnered with the NDDHHS to implement AVEL services to troopers statewide. AVEL provides expert 24/7 behavioral health assessments using telemedicine technology to those we are interacting with that may be having a mental health crisis. We can connect those in need with services right on the spot.

The Highway Patrol has enhanced our social media education and awareness efforts by growing the agency's Facebook page to over 115,000 followers, and our Instagram reach to over 20,900 followers.

Challenges and Next Biennium Goals

For 90 years, our agency's focus has been on traffic safety. However, we must continue to evolve and meet the needs of today's citizens. Unfortunately, as you can see, overdose deaths in North Dakota have remained higher than traffic fatalities. Our agency isn't changing its core mission but will continue to broaden our efforts as the citizen's needs change.

We've implemented Criminal Interdiction Teams along I-29, I-94 and US Hwy 2, which have been very successful. Next, we will be looking at becoming more active participants in the opioid fight by assisting area narcotic task forces and regional SWAT teams where feasible with staffing, as many of them are understaffed.



Our agency currently has memorandums of understanding with the MHA and Spirit Lake Nations. We will continue to respectfully pursue agreements with the remaining tribes (Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa, and Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate) to allow our agency to assist. Criminals continue to exploit the lack of law enforcement and are funneling narcotics to our tribal lands, where it is being redistributed throughout the state, killing tribal and state citizens.

NDHP BUDGET

Today I will present to you a budget request for the North Dakota Highway Patrol. The total funding level of the 2025-27 executive budget is \$89,390,258. The appropriation for the current biennium is \$71,189,188.

Funding Source	2023-2025 Appropriation	2025-2027 Governor Armstrong Executive Budget Recommendation
General Funds	\$ 49,438,826.00	\$ 63,239,826.00
Special Funds	\$ 13,090,027.00	\$ 10,069,876.00
Federal Funds	\$ 8,660,335.00	\$ 16,080,556.00
Total	\$ 71,189,188.00	\$ 89,390,258.00

The budget recommendation does not contain any new FTE's. The highway patrol did receive twelve (12) new trooper positions last session, which have been hired this biennium.

The highway patrol began the 2023-25 biennium with twenty-eight (28) open positions, this included the newly added twelve positions from the 68th assembly. After an aggressive hiring process which focused on hiring experienced law enforcement officers and an expedited training program, we were fully staffed by October 1, 2024.

As of the legislative reporting provided on December 1, 2024, our vacancy count was 6 sworn positions and 1 civilian security position. We have hired the security position and are currently in a hiring process for a May 2025 trooper class.

The Highway Patrol had \$5,319,935 removed the 2023-25 appropriations for purposes of the New and Vacant FTE program. Of that amount, approximately 80% or \$4,252,333.00 has been made available back to the agency for use. To date, we have applied for and been approved from OMB for \$2,655,849 to be pulled from the New FTE pool and will have \$1,589,484 remaining.

Future requests from the vacancy pool are anticipated to be made for the following salary related items, all of which were pre-existing programs or areas in which the agency has used unexpended salary dollars in the past. No new programs have been created for use of vacancy dollars since the implementation of the program.

Purpose	Expended	Anticipated	Total Estimated
Unfunded Step Increases	\$ 284,954.00	\$ 157,254.00	\$ 442,208.00
Recruitment Bonus	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 12,000.00
Performance Bonus	\$ 46,500.00	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 96,500.00
Sign-on Bonus	\$ 90,000.00	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 102,000.00
Temporary K9 Boarding	\$ 1,000.00		\$ 1,000.00
Call Out Pay (\$75)	\$ 66,900.00	\$ 22,300.00	\$ 89,200.00
.5% NDHPERS Increases 6/4%	\$ 9,750.00	\$ 3,250.00	\$ 13,000.00
Physical Fitness Awards	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 17,000.00
Temporary Salary Increase	\$ 1,000.00		\$ 1,000.00
Total	\$ 518,104.00	\$ 255,804.00	\$ 773,908.00

NDHP BUDGET OVERVIEW

The North Dakota Highway Patrol is a program-based budget with one program, field operations. The total agency appropriation for the 2023-35 biennium, after the removal of \$5,319,935.00 for the new and vacant FTE pool is \$71,189,188. The budget consists of \$49,438,826.00 in general funds, \$13,090,027 in special funds, and \$8,660,335 in federal funds.

The special funds come from two different sources, first is the highway tax distribution fund in SECTION 3 from HB 1011 and in SECTION 2 of this current bill SB 2011 (Section 5 in Senate Version). The highway tax distribution funds have traditionally been a transfer at a ratio 14% to 86% of general fund dollars to fund the state funding of the Highway Patrol's budget.

The second source of special funding is from the Electronic Motor Carrier Permit Fund, Fund 276. SECTION 4 in our current appropriation addresses this funding and SECTION 3 SB 2011 (Section 6 in Senate Version) addresses the upcoming transfer request.

The Highway Patrol receives federal funding from the following sources:

- Federal Motor Carrier – Motor Carrier Safety Assistance Program (MCSAP)
 - 23 sworn positions
- North Dakota Department of Transportation Pass Through Funding:
 - 1 Drug recognition officer position
 - Various enforcement overtime programs
- North Dakota Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Pass Through
 - Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funds
 - 2 Crash Assistance Program positions
- US Department of Justice – Bureau of Justice Assistance
 - Body Cam Program Funding - \$500,000.00
 - Funded in 2023-25 biennium.
 - Period of performance through Sept 2026
 - Training and In-Car Router Purchases
 - Carry-over authority to be requested

Base level funding

The 2025-27 legislative base level funding in SB 2011 is \$68,085,546.00, which includes \$47,657,320 in general, \$12,271,559 in special, and \$8,156,667 in federal

funds.

The 2025-27 executive budget request limit under Governor Burgum was \$50,021,562 in general funds, \$12,591,443 in special funds, and there was no limit on federal funding. The base budget limit added in the total market equity (TME) appropriation for the NDHP from the 2023-25 biennium which was \$1,288,655.

The total market equity funding was used to provide market equity funding for positions identified by OMB as needing adjustment. The other addition to the base limit was the NDPERS retirement contribution for \$29,903. The base limit also removed all the one-time funded items from the 2023-25 appropriation. I'll discuss the status of those items later in testimony.

The budget limit also had adjustments adding the funding that had been removed for the vacant FTE pool, \$5,319,935.00 and an NDIT allowance for \$266,476. Finally, there was a requested 3% reduction of general and special funds when we submitted our agency budget.

	General	Federal	Special	Total
2023-25 Legislative Appropriation	\$ 49,438,826.00	\$ 8,660,335.00	\$ 13,090,027.00	\$ 71,189,188.00
Adjustments for Base Budget				
Add TME Appropriation	\$ 1,035,355.00	\$ 143,373.00	\$ 109,927.00	\$ 1,288,655.00
Add Retirement Contribution	\$ 15,723.00	\$ 4,722.00	\$ 9,458.00	\$ 29,903.00
One-Time Items:				
Remove CVIEW		\$ (150,000.00)		\$ (150,000.00)
Remove New Trooper Startup Costs	\$ (514,584.00)	\$ (37,763.00)	\$ (83,653.00)	\$ (636,000.00)
Remove Inflationary Costs	\$ (2,154,000.00)	\$ (60,000.00)	\$ (348,000.00)	\$ (2,562,000.00)
Remove Narcotics Tester	\$ (52,000.00)		\$ (8,000.00)	\$ (60,000.00)
Remove UAV's	\$ (89,000.00)		\$ (15,000.00)	\$ (104,000.00)
Remove Motor Carrier Program Enhancements	\$ (23,000.00)	\$ (404,000.00)		\$ (427,000.00)
Remove Technology Enhancements			\$ (283,200.00)	\$ (283,200.00)
Remove Shooting Range Repairs			\$ (200,000.00)	\$ (200,000.00)
Legislative Base	\$ 47,657,320.00	\$ 8,156,667.00	\$ 12,271,559.00	\$ 68,085,546.00
Adjustments				
Add Funds Removed for Vacant FTE Pool	\$ 3,724,768.00	\$ 927,758.00	\$ 667,409.00	\$ 5,319,935.00
Add NDIT Allowance	\$ 186,533.00	\$ 34,642.00	\$ 45,301.00	\$ 266,476.00
Base Budget	\$ 51,568,621.00	\$ 9,119,067.00	\$ 12,984,269.00	\$ 73,671,957.00
Base Budget Reduction	\$ (1,547,059.00)		\$ (392,826.00)	\$ (1,939,885.00)
Base Budget after Reduction	\$ 50,021,562.00	\$ 9,119,067.00	\$ 12,591,443.00	\$ 71,732,072.00
2025-27 Base Budget Limit	\$ 50,021,562.00	No Limit	\$ 12,591,443.00	
Base Budget FTE				\$ 205.00

Now, I will begin to discuss the 2025-27 executive budget request. To start things off, the Highway Patrol submitted a budget that achieved the requested 3% reduction by reducing funding needed for salary and operating expenses equivalent to five (5) sworn trooper positions. The reduction achieved the 3% reduction in general funding along with the majority of the 3% reduction needed in special funding.

The remaining special fund reduction came through removing soft body armor, taser cartridges, and AED pads from special funding (Fund 276). These items were put into the permit funding model in the 2019-21 session and due to increases in cost for these items, it has made for difficult tracking. The body armor has increased in cost and has been moved to a general fund request which I will discuss in the decision packages, the taser cartridges have been moved to a separate request which will be part of an overall taser replacement request, and AED pads can likely be funded through other sources as needed.

Here you can see the Highway Patrol's budget is primarily salaries, motor pool, and equipment, which are the things needed to put troopers on the road and provide direct service to the public.

2025-27 Budget Base Level Request Items / Decision Packages

Restoration of positions

The first request is for the restoration of the funding for equivalent to the salary and operating expenses for five troopers. This amount was originally for \$4,687,343.00 in total funding or \$4,355,418.00 in general and \$331,925.00 in special funds in the executive budget. There was a duplication of one-time funding from last biennium that was included in this original request, this was in error. The amount was corrected in the senate to a request of \$1,384,625 in total funds, which includes \$1,190,778 in general and \$193,847 in special (highway tax distribution funds). This brings back the funding for positions that were removed in the original budget request amount that was provided by the agency to achieve the requested 3% budget reduction. This decision package was recommended in the executive budget, keeping the sworn staffing of the NDHP at 171 troopers.

Cost to continue – legislative increases

The next request is for the cost to continue funding in the amount of \$874,000, which is \$687,000 in general, \$111,000 in special, and \$76,000 in federal funds. This is

the amount required to fund year number two of the legislatively funded 4% pay increase from the 2023-25 biennium. Like past biennia, when the funding passes on July 1, the funding for the full 24 months of the first-year increase is funded in the bill, but the ongoing amount needed for final 12 months the 2nd year of the increase is not provided and is an ongoing cost to continue for the agency. We are requesting this funding, and it was recommended in the executive budget.

Reinstatement of equipment funding

Partial reinstatement of one-time inflationary funding for equipment and moving it to an ongoing appropriation is being requested in the amount of \$370,000. In the current biennium, we had \$520,000 of one-time funding for equipment, uniform, ammunition, and travel increases. We are requesting that the equipment portion be carried over and continued and it was recommended in the executive budget.

State fleet increases

State fleet, also known as motor pool, is a large portion of our agency's funding increase in this budget. In our current budget, we have approximately 6.5 million allocated for ongoing motor pool expenses. We budgeted for and received an additional \$2,042,000 in additional one-time funding which is removed in our base level funding. Between the ongoing and the one-time funding, we were planning for and funded for approximately 99 cents per mile. Currently, the actual billed rate is around 80 cents per mile. However, the 2025-2027 fleet rate guidance projects a significant increase in rates for the upcoming biennium. NDDOT provides and assigns vehicle and a motor pool vehicle guideline. The motor pool guideline has highway patrol vehicles at \$1.49/mile. We also calculated using the assigned vehicle guidelines with the assumptions that we will drive 9,734,400 miles in the biennium with an estimated average monthly inventory of 188 vehicles. The inventory considers that we have 171 officers with spare vehicles located in the regions for use when others are in for repairs, EVOG vehicles assigned to the LETA, and new vehicles in inventory that have been delivered but are awaiting to be upfitted and replaced. Using the guideline of \$448/vehicle/mo. plus \$1.13 per mile with the previously mentioned assumptions, the rate will be approximately \$1.34/mile.

There were multiple discussions with NDHP staff and NDDOT regarding the fleet guidelines.

Increases in depreciation rates, increase in new vehicle sales, decrease in auction values, fuel cost, and cost of repairs (labor and parts) are all factors that they believe will drive the cost up in the next biennium, the executive budget recommendation has \$1,525,000 in ongoing funding and \$4,483,000 in one-time funding. The executive budget request is equivalent to approximately 1.28/mile. Changes in the senate to one-time fleet funding reduced the funding from \$4,483,000 to \$3,483,000 or roughly \$1.18/mile based on the earlier assumptions I discussed.

Body armor

We are requesting \$184,000 in ongoing funding for body armor. The previous body armor funding was in the permit fund for \$124,000 in ongoing funding from the permit funding. As part of the 3% reduction to special funds, this was removed and requested in general funds to achieve two things. First, the tracking and accounting of body armor purchases was challenging because of different orders during the biennium being billed to different funding sources. Second, the amount of funding provided back in the 2019-21 biennium was no longer sufficient for today's pricing. We replace approximately 1/5 of our body armor annually, as body armor lasts approximately 5 years.

FLIR maintenance agreement

The Highway Patrol Cessna T206 aircraft is installed with a forward looking infrared (FLIR) device. The FLIR is used to search for missing and wanted individuals, track vehicles in pursuits, overwatch and surveillance as needed, and most recently provided valuable surveillance and monitoring of wildfires in the northwest part of the state. The FLIR was purchased in 2018 and the normal and extended warranty has expired. We are seeking \$88,000 in on-going funding for the service maintenance agreement to cover maintenance, training, and calibration for the remainder of the life of the unit. The anticipated end of service life of the FLIR is around 2029.

Crash Assistance Program

We are requesting funding authority from the electronic motor carrier permit fund for \$194,000 in special funds. The two Crash Assistance Program positions were originally funded in the 2021-23 biennium with funding from the electronic motor carrier permit fund, but later the positions were transitioned to being partially federally funded. The funding is through Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funding administered and passed through the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. The current VOCA funding for Federal Fiscal Year was reduced but was later off set by state funding acquired by DOCR. We are anticipating, however increased reductions in funding for the upcoming biennium and can't accurately predict how much will be reduced.

The executive budget request is for \$194,000 in ongoing appropriation from the electronic motor carrier permit fund, this will allow us to rely on a stable funding stream, which the positions were initially funded under as the VOCA program seems to be moving towards uncertain times. These two positions have been an invaluable asset to the agency, our troopers, and those individuals and families involved in tragic events.

NDIT Increases / Software

We are seeking \$150,000 in ongoing general and special funding to offset the costs for video editing software at the LETA to assist in the creation and editing of videos to be used to provide in a remote training platform, providing more opportunities for offerings to be provide to law enforcement agencies when an in-person or hands on experience isn't required.

Additionally, the funding will be used for Maintenance and Operations (M&O) agreement fees with NDIT to provide network support services for the Blackboard™ learning management program that was recently installed for use at the LETA.

The remaining funding will be used to assist with the current deficit in normal data processing funding the NDHP experiences each month.

Office lease rate increases

We are requesting \$222,000 in ongoing general and special funding the lease increases at properties around the state.

- Bismarck airplane hangar space will increase by an additional \$2,500/biennium.
- Bismarck warehouse location to increase by an additional \$4,000/biennium.
- Grand Forks regional office to increase by an additional \$8,600/biennium.

Additionally, we are seeking the potential for an alternative for the Minot office. Our current space is not in the best condition. The current landlord has not kept up with timely and necessary improvements. The anticipated amount needed is in this request is \$60,000 to increase our current lease rate of 10.00/square foot to 18.00/square foot for the same amount of space. The most recent data we have from the time of the budget submission was that rates in Minot were around 16.00/square foot.

The Devils Lake office is also dated, and there is a potential opportunity to have lease space in a Law Enforcement Center that is in the planning stages to be constructed. Estimates indicate an increase of approximately \$25,000 per biennium. If the new LEC does not come to fruition, it is still requested that we receive the funding to explore more acceptable space or working with the landlord for some updates at the office in Devils Lake.

The last lease request is for the Fargo office. During a previous biennium the agency was requested to submit a reduced budget. As part of that reduced budget, the agency gave up lease space in Fargo and Bismarck and moved into space in the NDDOT offices at a reduced rate. Although the space in Bismarck has worked well, the space in Fargo is not large enough to meet our needs. We are seeking funding to either find additional space or relocate our office to a larger space. This is a difficult topic, because we do enjoy the partnership, relationships, and convenience of being at the DOT building in Fargo, but the space is just too small for the needs of our highest staffed regional office in the state. We are seeking \$122,000 in additional lease funding for Fargo.

In-Car router program ongoing costs

The Highway Patrol received a grant for \$500,000 through the US Department of Justice – Bureau of Justice assistance as part of a body camera grant program. The funding is being and will be used for body camera policy and program development, training for our agency, other law enforcement, and prosecutors from around the state. The main use of the funding, however, will be to purchase in-car routers with the funding. In car router technology will boost the WiFi signal in our patrol vehicles which will ultimately help upload body camera footage from vehicles as well as transition to livestreaming at some point. There are many other non-body camera related benefits of having a network in the vehicle that is provided by the router. The network will enhance the performance of the laptop and bring the ability to update the new SIRN radios remotely. The funding request is for \$210,000 of ongoing general and special funds will for the NDIT fees to provide network support, hardware support, and a hardware replacement model built into the fee for when it comes time to update the router hardware. In-Car router technology has become the standard in law enforcement, especially in rural areas requiring the ability to boost a signal beyond just a traditional SIM card/external booster combination that we currently operate in our laptops. This configuration also requires us to run everything in our vehicle requiring network through the laptop, which slows down the machine.

EcoStruxure™ Security Expert

The Security Expert funding request is an extension to a project from the current biennium. NDIT received funding for the installation of hardware for the project that is nearing completion or has recently been completed. The previous project was for the installation of all the upgraded door access hardware on the capitol complex doors.

The funding we are requesting is for the software licensing to control the door access. The highway patrol is in charge of security and has the responsibility of assigning card access. To streamline funding, it was agreed upon by OMB, NDI, and the NDHP that it best fit within our budget to pay for the software. We would pay for the software licensing instead of other the other agencies needing to bill back to individual user agencies. The request is for \$218,000 in general funds.

Status of 2023-25 One-Time Projects

One-Time Funding Item	Amount	Source	Status
New Trooper Startup Cost	\$ 636,000.00	Gen./Spec./Fed.	Complete (100%)
State Fleet Mileage Increase	\$ 2,042,000.00	Gen./Spec./Fed.	Pending
Inflationary Increase	\$ 520,000.00	Gen./Spec.	Pending
Narcotics Tester	\$ 60,000.00	Gen./Spec.	Complete (100%)
UAV Enhancements	\$ 104,000.00	Gen./Spec.	Pending
Motor Carrier Program Enhancements	\$ 427,000.00	Federal/General	Partial
Technology Projects	\$ 283,200.00	Gen./Spec.	Partial
CVIEW Project	\$ 150,000.00	Federal	Complete
Range Enhancements	\$ 200,000.00	Special	Partial (75%)
Total	\$ 4,422,200.00		

The first one-time item in the current biennium is the new trooper startup costs for \$636,000, these are the costs associated with putting a new trooper on the road. They coincided with the twelve new trooper positions that were authorized and hired for. The costs mainly include equipment for the vehicle and officer and uniforms.

There was \$2,042,000.00 put into the current biennium budget for motor pool, we anticipate having to use some of the funding for motor pool, but there will likely be turnback. It is unknown what the turnback will be at this point with four months remaining in the biennium.

As mentioned previously in testimony, for the next item, inflationary increases in equipment, ammunition, uniforms, and travel were also included in our current budget as a one time for \$520,000. At this point we are comfortable reducing that amount to only an ongoing request in equipment for \$370,000.

The Tru-Narc™ narcotics testers for \$60,000 funded in this biennium have been purchased and one is being used in Fargo and one in Bismarck.

The Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) program funding for \$104,000 is nearly completed, we are in the process of purchasing the remaining UAV.

We were provided \$427,000 in additional spending authority to utilize additional Federal MCSAP funds that were made available after the passage of the Biden Infrastructure Law (BIL). Those enhancements included a purchase of UAV's to be used for MCSAP related purposes, that project is completed. The next item was the purchase of crash reconstruction equipment for our crash reconstructionists to use in the investigation and reconstruction of commercial vehicle crashes, that project is completed. Funding was provided to use the Upper Great Plains Traffic Institute to complete a Safe Truck Mobility Study, which focused on wintertime CMV driving and crashes in North Dakota, that project was completed. There was funding to complete some software programming between our records management program and the federal CMV inspection program, that was not completed. There was also funding to complete an electronic signage project at the Buxton rest area to assist with providing direction for CMV inspections. That project was not completed due to the inability to find interested contractors to bid the project for the funds available. The funding for the uncompleted projects will be de-obligated.

We were provided \$283,200 in one-time funding for technology projects. Those projects included the implementation of the Blackboard™ learning management system at the law enforcement training academy, which is just nearing completion, Power FTO™ field training software (complete), a portal for state's attorney's to view videos from our video system (partially completed, but functional), video and photo storage, various maintenance projects for our dailies and records management program, and a real time dashboard research project. The maintenance projects are partially completed, and the dashboard project will not be completed, and the funds will be turned back.

The Commercial Vehicle Information Exchange Window (CVIEW), which was \$150,000 in one-time federal funding carried over from the 2021-23 biennium is fully completed. The CVIEW is used to bring multiple data sources together for our troopers, primarily our MCSAP troopers to conduct CMV inspections more efficiently on interstate carriers.

The indoor shooting range project, which we received \$200,000 in one-time funding from the electronic motor carrier permit fund is nearing completion.

Enhancements have been made to the flooring, portable targets through Triumph Systems, a lead vacuum, and a new electronic targeting system through Action Targets will be installed this spring. In addition to the indoor enhancements, we may also be able to fund some ventilation improvements to our outdoor range to address some immediate concerns with smoke not clearing on days when the wind is not blowing out of the right direction. The smoke has made the range unusable at times and unhealthy. This project was also requested and has been approved in the 2025-27 executive budget.

2025-27 Budget One-time funding requests:

One-Time Funding Item	Amount	Source
Conducted Energy Weapon (Taser™)	\$ 870,000.00	Special (Fund 276)
Emergency Vehicle Operations Course Resurface	\$ 260,000.00	General/Special
Preliminary Alcohol Breath Screening Device	\$ 50,000.00	General/Special
Outdoor Range Ventilation	\$ 35,000.00	General/Special
Total	\$ 1,215,000.00	

The first one-time request is for Conducted Energy Weapon, otherwise known as Taser™ replacement. Our current taser is the model X26P, which is reaching the end of life and will no longer be serviced by Axon, the manufacturer. They are no longer warrantied. The current units we have were purchased in 2018. We are requesting funding to purchase the Taser 10, which will provide greater reliability with the capability to use at a further distance with more probes, up to 10, if necessary. The request is for 162 units for a total of \$870,000 in one-time funding from the electronic motor carrier permit fund, which includes the taser, cartridge replacements, training, and necessary service. Here’s a video demonstrating the use of the Taser 10:

The next request is for \$260,000 in funding for a resurface of the driving pad which is used for the emergency vehicle operations course (EVOC). The pad is vital for training law enforcement in emergency vehicle operations. We have worked with NDDOT to investigate options to best maintain the pad based on the current condition and they have offered the suggestion of the resurface. The pad was constructed in 2014 and was last resurfaced in 2018.

The next one-time request is for preliminary alcohol breath testing (PBT) device replacements. Our current units were purchased in 2012. The fuel cells are exceeding their useful life. These units are a critical tool for troopers to determine impairment of drivers who are being tested for driving under the influence of alcohol. The request is for \$50,000 in one-time funding.

The last one-time funding request was for \$35,000 to be able to fund some ventilation improvements to our outdoor range. As previously mentioned, these improvements will remedy concerns with smoke not clearing on days when the wind is not blowing out of the right direction. The smoke has made the range unusable at times and unhealthy. Although this is a request that has been approved in the executive budget, it may be able to be completed with funds available in the current biennium funding for range improvements and we are working to make that happen due to the health issues posed by the conditions.

Agency Collections

Fund	2023-2025 Collections (Est.)*	2025-2027 Collections (Est.)*
Permit Fund (276)	\$2,443,000	\$2,443,000
Highway Fund (200)	\$36,746,000	\$36,746,000
ID Card Fund (471)	\$1,000	\$1,000
HTDF Fuel Tax (400)	\$170,000	\$170,000
Misc. Gen Rev. (001)	\$20,000	\$20,000
Total	\$39,380,000	\$39,380,000

**Estimates based on biennium to date collections as of November 30, 2024:*

- *Collections from fund 276 e-permit fees - \$1,730,484*
- *Hwy Fund 200 overload fees - \$26,028,352*
- *ID card processing fund 471 fees - \$670*

State Fiscal Recovery Funds

The highway patrol was appropriated \$5,731,223.55 in State Fiscal Recovery Funds. We've spent or obligated to spend \$5,421,483.55. The remaining funds have been identified with OMB to be de-obligated. Approximately \$309,740.00 will be transferred from the NDHP for use by the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation.

Additional Appropriation Considerations

The highway patrol has three sections listed in our appropriations bill that we'd ask for your consideration to carry over into next biennium.

The first, in SECTION 5 of the Senate Version, is a transfer of highway tax distribution funds from the Department of Transportation, which is the amount necessary to achieve the approximate 14% ratio to 86% general funds for the general/special funded items in the NDHP budget. A transfer of \$10,878,893 in highway tax distribution funds was recommended in the base level budget and has been adjusted to \$12,804,056 to align with the executive budget and the changes made in the senate.

The second, in SECTION 6, is related to a transfer of special funds from the electronic motor carrier permit transaction fund. This fund has been used to cover expenses related to the online permits system in addition to expenses for a permit supervisor, two permit technicians, a records technician, three administrative assistants and partial funding for two crash assistance program members. The original amount from the base budget was \$1,392,668. This amount after the executive budget and changes made in the senate is \$2,725,828. The increase in funding includes taser replacements, crash assistance program funding and salary increases for the positions funding from the permits fund.

The third, in SECTION 7, is related to an unvouchered expense of \$200 per month that is provided to sworn officers in lieu of processing individual reimbursement requests for expenses such as dry-cleaning and meals while officers are working in-state. This expense has been authorized for decades, and the current level of \$200 has been in place since the 2009 legislative session. This amount is recommended in the executive budget.

Major Senate Changes

- \$3,303,712 was removed from the decision package restoring (5) trooper positions. This amount was incorrect in the budget entry and the agency agrees with the correction. The correct amount needed is in the adjusted totals.
- \$1,047,910 was removed for the 2025-27 new and vacant FTE pool.
- \$1,000,000 was removed from Fleet Services (motor pool)
- Section 4. revised the funding source for the emergency vehicle operations course from general to SIIF funds (\$260,000).
- Section 5. revised the amount of funding to be transferred from the Highway Tax Distribution Fund to align with the Senate changes.
- Section 6. revised the amount of funding to be transferred from the Electronic Motor Carrier Permit Fund to align with Senate changes.

Additional House Considerations:

Carryover in funding

- From the \$500,000 in Federal Funding (US-Department of Justice Body Camera Program Grant) we would like to request **\$480,000 in federal authority**. Currently, we have spent approximately \$15,000 and are in the test phase for in-car routers. The test routers arrived and with installation, that bill should be around 5,000. The period of performance for this grant is through September 2026. The ongoing sustainability of the router project is dependent upon approval of a \$210,000 request in this budget request, If approved we'd be ready to purchase early in the new biennium.
- Additionally, we would like to request **\$45,000 in one-time Permit (Fund 276)** funding be carried over. This funding is from the \$283,200 identified in the 2023-25 One-Time Funded items as "Technology Enhancements." Of those projects in that amount there was a dashboard project that was called out in testimony being \$15,000, that project won't be completed, and the funds will be unexpended. The \$45,000 being requested is from the \$50,000 that was called out in testimony for the State's Attorney Portal/UDE project. We've been waiting for an update with our Panasonic UDE system before being able to make the portal enhancements. That updated didn't come from Panasonic until just recently and NDIT doesn't believe that the portal will be able to be completed by the end of the biennium.

Correction for Body Armor Amendment out of Senate Appropriations

- When the amendments were being reviewed from Senate appropriations, it was noticed that the funding for soft body armor had been moved from ongoing to one-time funding. It is unknown if this was intentional or inadvertent as there wasn't any discussion. When we reached out to Legislative Council, we were requested to address the correction when we came in front of the house.

Correction for Crash Assistance Program Amendment out of Appropriations

- Like the body armor funding, the same thing happened with the ongoing funding request for the Crash Assistance Program and the same request was provided by Legislative Council. We are respectfully requesting that both body armor and crash assistance program funding be moved back into ongoing funding.

Agency-Related Bills

- **Senate Bill 2075**
 - Intrastate driver exemptions, changing 12-hour requirement to 14 hours for an employee to be released from work.
 - Amended, Passed Senate 47-0, will be heard tomorrow in House Transportation
 - No budgetary impact
- **Senate Bill 2083**
 - Crash scene image exemptions for body camera footage that may contain nudity, serious bodily injury or a deceased individual.
 - Amended, Passed the senate 47-0 and passed House Judiciary 12-0-2
 - No budgetary impact
- **Senate Bill 2098**
 - State Alert Notice system
 - Puts Amber, Blue and Silver alerts under one century code and sets activation requirements.
 - Amended, Passed Senate 46-0

- **House Bill 1038**
 - Uncrewed aerial vehicle replacement program
 - Amended, Passed House/Passed Senate/Emergency/At Governor for Signature

- **House Bill 1199**
 - Missing Indigenous People Task Force
 - Address barriers to locating indigenous individuals
 - Amended, Passed House 73-12

- **Senate Bill 2120**
 - ND Highway Patrol Retirement System
 - Passed Senate 44--0, being heard tomorrow morning in House Government and Veteran’s Affairs. Increases funding liability to 90% as of January 1, 2026
 - Budgetary impact of \$35,000,000.00
 - The highway patrol’s PERS fund is projected to become insolvent based on the most recent actuarial valuation results dated October 25, 2022.
 - The highway patrol went through a four-year cycle of 0.5% employee and employer contribution rate increases that started January 1 of 2022 and ended January 1 of 2025 – 4% total.
 - Factoring upcoming rate increases, the highway patrol fund is still 16% below the “actuarially required rate” for contributions.
 - The funded ratio is currently around 70% and is projected to be around 40% by the year 2062.
 - Several options have been discussed including a one-time infusion, which this bill addresses.

PERS Plans - As of January 2025	Main	Public Safety	Highway Patrol
Employee PERS Contribution*	3	1.5	11.3
Employee Social Security Contribution	6.2	6.2	0
Total Employee Contribution	9.2	7.7	11.3
Employer PERS Contribution	12.26	11.93	25.7
Employer Social Security Contribution	6.2	6.2	0
Medicare	1.45	1.45	1.45
Health Insurance Credit	0	1.14	1.14
Total Employer Contribution	19.91	20.72	28.29
Total Combined Contribution	29.11	28.42	39.59
Vesting	3 years - age 65	3 years	10 years
Early Retirement Age	60	50	50
Normal Retirement Age	Rule of 90 - age 65	Rule of 85 - age 55	Rule of 80 - age 55
Benefit Formula	1.75%	1.75%	3.6% for 25 years then 1.75%
Early Retirement Reduction	8%/year	6%/year	6%/year

*Factoring 4% of employee portion covered by the state.

Changes to the Executive Budget Recommendation

Aside from the correction identified in the “Restore trooper costs, removed in base budget reduction line” of the long sheet, the Highway Patrol is not seeking any changes to the executive budget recommendation.

Conclusion

As the superintendent of the highway patrol representing North Dakota’s finest public safety professionals, we ask for your support in allowing us to serve the public.

As the state’s population has steadily increased, so has crime. Today’s young generation doesn’t necessary seek out physical jobs. To progressively stay near full staffing, we implemented military police waivers, an accelerated academy for prior experienced officers, we’ve changed our education requirements, and we transformed our cultural liaison officer position into a hybrid with recruitment. Our employees have displayed an unprecedented level of dedication, heroism, and commitment to the citizens of this state.

For 90 years we have been the agency others rely on in times of natural disasters and emergencies. While the state’s population has increased, so has the increase of drugs into our communities. We stand committed to the citizens in the prevention of not only traffic deaths, but all unnecessary deaths.

We are involved in a dangerous and unforgiving profession with public safety in mind. In this current biennium, we’ve had nine trooper’s vehicles struck and totaled, nine troopers have been assaulted, and one officer involved shooting. Troopers have continuously put public safety ahead of their own.

This session presents an opportunity to send a clear message of support. The highway patrol is more than traffic safety, we are public safety. This concludes my testimony, and I look forward to working with you all more closely as the session continues. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and members of the committee. I’d be happy to answer any questions.

I would ask for your consideration of the executive budget recommendation.