

HB 1106

My name is Susan Dingle; I live in Bismarck, District 35, and vote in every election. My testimony is in favor of HB1106. Entities from cities to counties across North Dakota need more money available in state grants for public transportation. State grants have been relatively static while operations costs, vehicle costs, parts, labor—drivers and mechanics—benefits, insurance, and related costs for running public transportation systems have gone up. Everywhere! Transportation providers get money from federal and state grants, at times from private grants, and also from local property taxes. The problem is, for all providers, the monies available do not quite cover the required costs. Either they try to raise property taxes, raise other taxes, or cut back services. In nearly every case, cutting back services means cutting into the bone—local transportation providers are not flush with cash or unused/unneeded routes or pick-ups and drop-offs. Service cutbacks mean regular users not getting needed rides; user dissatisfaction and inability to get around; drops in service quality, perhaps challenges to keeping service open. More state grant support for public transportation means less pressure on local support and less pressure on pushes to raise property taxes to support public transportation. This is another property tax relief measure, in effect, and a good one. Please vote for it.