

1/15/2025

To: North Dakota Legislature-69th Legislative Session

From: Travis Bateman

Re: HB 2132

Chairman Clemens and members of the committee,

Greetings,

I send this written testimony to you in favor to HB 2132.

Every day and every night across this state and nation there are emergency responders, tow recovery operators, and state and local DOT employees that are endangered by drivers failing to slow down and or move over for the flashing emergency lights that accompany their presence.

The current traffic fines and point system is extremely outdated and literally has no teeth. This topic is also one that warrants the additional role protections and needs to have increased monetary and point penalties to further enhance and work towards showing the seriousness of the risks involved in failing to move over or slow down.

I have personally worked roadway scenes in law enforcement, fire/rescue, and EMS and I cannot even begin to count how many times we worked a scene and someone or myself had to yell for others on scene to run for the ditch due to a motorist careening into our scene and not even so much as tapping the brakes. Or run for the patrol vehicle to chase down said motorist after they nearly struck us. The NDHP recently posted dashcam video on their Facebook page showing a close call where a state trooper was nearly struck by a pickup at highway speed on a dry road with sunny weather. There are plenty of others out there to see, some resulting in the loss of life to those that are simply out there trying to perform their duties and help people.

If you have ever been standing along a highway with a 65-mph speed limit or the interstate for that matter, then you probably have a sense of just how fast things can happen or how inherently dangerous it is. How about trying to change a flat tire on a roadway with a shoulder that is only wide enough for the vehicle and not for the workspace needed to keep you out of the travel lane?

This issue is not getting any better. We need you to help enhance the penalties and protections. It may literally save a life or lives of our emergency responders and others out on these scenes. Leave it up to me and I would place a \$1,000 monetary fine and six points on a driver license. That is how serious this is and needs to be taken.

Neighboring states have far more impactful fine schedules for failing to move over or slow down:
-MONTANA: The fine for a first offense of not slowing down or moving over for a vehicle jumped from \$25 to **\$100**. It is one of the highest fines in the country for a Move Over Law.

-SOUTH DAKOTA: South Dakota's Move Over law requires travelers to move over and/or slow down when a stopped vehicle is in use of amber, yellow, or blue warning lights. A violation of this law is a Class 2 misdemeanor, which is punishable by a minimum fine of **\$270.00 and/or 30 days in jail**.

-MINNESOTA: Failing to move over or slow down to what a reasonable person would consider a safe speed is punishable by a fine of more than **\$100**.

Please give HB 2132 the enhancements and additions it seeks. Do this for our law enforcement officers, our firefighters (majority volunteer), our EMS personnel (also majority volunteer), those and provide a DO PASS recommendation.

Thank you for your support of our state's emergency responders, tow recovery and DOT crews,

Travis Bateman
Watford City, ND