

2025 HOUSE TRANSPORTATION

HB 1052

2025 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Transportation Committee
Room JW327E, State Capitol

HB 1052
1/10/2025

Regulation of tourist oriented directional signs
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9:02 a.m. Chairman D. Ruby called the meeting to order.

Members Present: Chairman D. Ruby, Vice Chairman Grueneich, Representatives Christianson, Dressler, Finley-DeVille, Frelich, Hendrix, Johnston, Kasper, Koppelman, Maki, Morton, Osowski, Schatz

Discussion Topics:

- State Tourism
- Advertising
- Rural Business

9:03 a.m. Matt Linneman, Deputy Director of Engineering, ND Department of Transportation, testified in favor #28109.

9:11 a.m. Ron Henke, Director, ND Department of Transportation, testified in favor.

9:35 a.m. Randy Albrecht, Owner, Wolf Creek Winery, testified in opposition# 28390.

9:44 a.m. Leo Ness, Newman Signs, testified in opposition.

9:48 a.m. Chairman Ruby closed the hearing.

Joseph Reed, Committee Clerk

**House Bill No. 1052****House Transportation Committee**

Room 327E | Jan. 10, 2025, 9 a.m.

Matt Linneman, Deputy Director for Engineering

Good morning, Chair and members of the Committee. I'm Matt Linneman, deputy director for engineering for the North Dakota Department of Transportation (NDDOT). I'm here to introduce and provide supportive testimony related to HB 1052.

This bill will update the language in North Dakota Century Code (NDCC) Section 39-13-09 clarifying where Tourism-Oriented Directional Signs (TODS) may be placed. TODS are signs that display the business identification and directional information for eligible business, services, and activity facilities.

The Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) is the guide for all signing and traffic control for all streets and highways. The MUTCD is formally adopted by the department under NDCC Section 39-13-06. The MUTCD provides direction on the requirements and permissible use for the TODS program.

When the TODS program was started these signs were allowed in urban areas. Recent changes to the MUTCD now state they are not allowed to be installed on conventional roads in urban or urbanized areas or on the freeway or expressway main roadways or ramps. The proposed bill aligns NDCC with the MUTCD.

Additionally, the MUTCD now allows for the use of logos on tourist oriented directional signs. The NDDOT is proposing an amendment to the bill to strike out the language at the end of Section 2 of NDCC 39-13-09 which states: "except that the rules must provide that logos may not be used on tourist-oriented direction signs." This would further align NDCC with the MUTCD.

The NDDOT recommends a "do pass" on HB 1052. This concludes my testimony. Thank you.

Date: January 8, 2025

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 01/10/25

To: North Dakota Legislative Transportation Committee

From: Winery Association of North Dakota (WAND)

- Robert Grosz, (dakotavineswinery@gmail.com) President WAND and Co-Owner Dakota Vines Vineyard and Winery
- Randy Albrecht (ralbre@live.com), Treasure WAND and Owner Wolf Creek Winery
- Lisa Cook (4ewinery@gmail.com) Secretary WAND and Co-Owner 4e Winery

Subject: Written Testimony - Opposition to Proposed Changes to HB 1052

On behalf of the Winery Association of North Dakota, we would like to voice our opposition to the proposed changes to HB 1052. These amendments, particularly the removal of language recognizing businesses within city limits and the restriction of tourist-oriented directional signs to rural highways, could have serious consequences for rural agricultural businesses and tourism attractions across the state.

Concerns with Changes to Section 39-13-09 (1b)

Impact on Rural Agricultural Businesses and Tourism Attractions:

Removing the phrase “within the city limits in which the business is located” from Section 39-13-09 (1b) risks excluding businesses within city limits that rely heavily on rural agricultural and tourism activities. This exclusion disrupts the interconnected tourism system, where both rural and city-based rural agricultural businesses and tourism attractions play a role in attracting visitors.

- **Reduced Incentive for Investment: Creating Inequity: Fragmenting Tourism Ecosystems:**

Concerns with Changes to Section 39-13-09 (4)

Loss of Visibility for Tourist Attractions:

Restricting tourist-oriented directional signs to rural highways reduces the visibility of attractions for travelers on state and local roads. Many visitors rely on signage to discover destinations, especially in unfamiliar areas.

- **Economic Harm to Local Businesses: Broader Impact on Local Economies:**

Recommendations

To support the growth of rural agricultural businesses and tourism in North Dakota, we urge the legislature to:

1. **Retain the original language in Section 39-13-09 (1b):** Ensure rural agricultural businesses and tourism attractions within city limits remain eligible for support.
2. **Avoid limiting tourist-oriented directional signs to rural highways:** Ensuring visibility for rural agricultural businesses and tourism attractions on all roadways.

These steps are essential for fostering a strong and equitable tourism ecosystem that benefits all communities and businesses across the state.

Thank you for considering these concerns. We look forward to working together to support the continued success of North Dakota's rural agricultural businesses and tourism industry.

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11:16 a.m. Chairman D. Ruby called the meeting to order.

Members Present: Chairman D. Ruby, Vice Chairman Grueneich, Representatives Christianson, Dressler, Finley-DeVille, Frelich, Hendrix, Johnston, Kasper, Koppelman, Maki, Morton, Osowski, Schatz

Discussion Topics:

- Tourism
- Roadside Signage
- Historic Sites

11:24 a.m. Representative Koppelman moved a Do Pass.

11:25 a.m. Motion failed due to lack of second.

11:25 a.m. Representative Grueneich moved a Do Not Pass.

11:25 a.m. Representative Schatz seconded the motion.

Representatives	Vote
Representative Dan Ruby	Y
Representative Jim Grueneich	Y
Representative Nels Christianson	Y
Representative Ty Dressler	Y
Representative Lisa Finley-DeVille	Y
Representative Kathy Frelich	Y
Representative Jared Hendrix	Y
Representative Daniel Johnston	Y
Representative Jim Kasper	Y
Representative Ben Koppelman	N
Representative Roger A. Maki	Y
Representative Desiree Morton	Y
Representative Doug Osowski	Y
Representative Mike Schatz	Y

11:27 a.m. Motion passed 13-1-0.

11:27 a.m. Representative Christianson will carry the bill.

11:28 a.m. Chairman D. Ruby closed the meeting.

Joseph Reed, Committee Clerk

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE
HB 1052 ([25.8040.01000](#))

Transportation Committee (Rep. D. Ruby, Chairman) recommends **DO NOT PASS** (13 YEAS, 1 NAY, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). HB 1052 was placed on the Eleventh order on the calendar.