

69th Legislative Assembly

Neutral Testimony

Senate Bill No. 2183

Senate Transportation Committee

January 31, 2025

TESTIMONY OF

Sergeant Jenna Clawson Huibregtse

Chairman Clemens and members of the Senate Transportation Committee, my name is Jenna Clawson Huibregtse, and I am a Sergeant with the North Dakota Highway Patrol. My duties include being the Safety and Education officer for the agency. Thank you for the opportunity to provide neutral testimony regarding the proposed changes to the fines for speeding violations in highway construction zones and the proposed striking of “while workers are present.”

The safety of workers in construction zones is paramount. Every year, workers are put at risk by speeding and distracted drivers who fail to recognize the dangers in these areas. The purpose of enhanced penalties in construction zones is to encourage compliance with posted speed limits, ensuring the safety of both workers and the motoring public. Money collected from citations goes into the Common Schools Trust Fund and not to the agency.

As written, the bill stipulates that the increased fine structure would always apply versus only when workers are present. Construction zones are dynamic environments and present challenges when they can change overnight. The Highway Patrol currently works construction zones when and where workers are present during construction season. There is extra emphasis on these zones via overtime programs specifically for construction zones. When we work these areas, we work in the zone and near workers to help keep them safe. When workers are not on site, we do not direct troopers to enforce in these areas and that would remain the same with this change.

| ND Motor Vehicle Crashes in Work Zones by Crash Severity 2023-2024* | | | |
|---|------|------|-----|
| Crashes only Responded to by All Law Enforcement Agencies | | | |
| | 2023 | 2024 | |
| O - No Apparent Injury | 205 | 171 | 376 |
| K - Fatal Injury | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| A - Suspected Serious Injury | 7 | 6 | 13 |
| B - Suspected Minor Injury | 44 | 27 | 71 |
| C - Possible Injury | 34 | 29 | 63 |
| Total | 290 | 233 | 523 |

Source: TraCS and CRS Data, January 2025

* 2024 Data is Preliminary

The North Dakota Highway Patrol's enforcement efforts in construction zones are aimed at protecting lives. Excessive speed and distracted driving in construction zones create hazards for all road users and workers, and enforcement is necessary to deter reckless behavior.

This concludes my testimony, and I am happy to answer any questions.