

**NEWS RELEASE** | **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** | July 26, 2021

## **UPDATE Billings County 2-Vehicle Fatal Crash**

**What:** Fatality

**Where:** Highway 85 - mile marker 89.5 – approximately 13 miles north of Belfield, ND

**When:** 07/25/2021 at approximately 3:40 pm (Mountain Time)

**Road Conditions:** Good

**Weather Conditions:** Clear

**Crash Involvement:** 2-vehicle

**Type of Crash:** Head-on

**Agencies Involved:** Billings County Sheriff's Department, Dunn County Sheriff's Department, Billings County Ambulance and Billings County Fire Department

**Vehicle No. 1:** 2015 Ford Explorer

**Driver No. 1:** **Gracie Johnsrud** – 20 years old – Watford City, ND - Fatal

**Restraints:** Seatbelt: yes. Airbags: yes

**Charges:** N/A

**Vehicle No. 2:** 2012 Dodge Ram 5500

**Driver No. 2:** **Francisco Melgar** – 59 years old – Stafford, TX – Non-life-threatening injuries

**Restraints:** Seatbelt: unknown. Airbags: yes.

**Charges:** Under Investigation

**NARRATIVE:** The Ford Explorer was traveling southbound on Highway 85 near mile marker 89.5. The Dodge Ram was traveling northbound on Highway 85 near mile marker 89.5. The Ford Explorer was southbound in the northbound lane. The driver of the Dodge Ram turned left and entered the southbound lane. The driver of the Ford Explorer turned right to correct and entered the southbound lane. The vehicles collided in the southbound lane. The Ford Explorer came to rest in the west ditch. The Dodge Ram came to rest on the west shoulder.

The driver of the Dodge Ram was transported to CHI – St Alexius' Hospital in Dickinson and treated for non-life-threatening injuries. The driver of the Ford Explorer was pronounced deceased at the scene.

Highway 85 was temporarily closed in this area for approximately 4 hours with traffic detoured until the scene could be cleared.

This crash remains under investigation by the North Dakota Highway Patrol.

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**For More Information Contact:**

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