

**FISCAL NOTE**  
**Requested by Legislative Council**  
**01/13/2017**

Bill/Resolution No.: HB 1287

- 1 A. **State fiscal effect:** *Identify the state fiscal effect and the fiscal effect on agency appropriations compared to funding levels and appropriations anticipated under current law.*

	2015-2017 Biennium		2017-2019 Biennium		2019-2021 Biennium	
	General Fund	Other Funds	General Fund	Other Funds	General Fund	Other Funds
Revenues						
Expenditures						
Appropriations						

- 1 B. **County, city, school district and township fiscal effect:** *Identify the fiscal effect on the appropriate political subdivision.*

	2015-2017 Biennium	2017-2019 Biennium	2019-2021 Biennium
Counties			
Cities			
School Districts			
Townships			

- 2 A. **Bill and fiscal impact summary:** *Provide a brief summary of the measure, including description of the provisions having fiscal impact (limited to 300 characters).*

This bill pertains to graduated driver licensing, driver’s licenses issued to operators, restricted licenses, and class D instruction permits.

- B. **Fiscal impact sections:** *Identify and provide a brief description of the sections of the measure which have fiscal impact. Include any assumptions and comments relevant to the analysis.*

This bill should not have a material fiscal impact.

3. **State fiscal effect detail:** *For information shown under state fiscal effect in 1A, please:*

- A. **Revenues:** *Explain the revenue amounts. Provide detail, when appropriate, for each revenue type and fund affected and any amounts included in the executive budget.*
- B. **Expenditures:** *Explain the expenditure amounts. Provide detail, when appropriate, for each agency, line item, and fund affected and the number of FTE positions affected.*
- C. **Appropriations:** *Explain the appropriation amounts. Provide detail, when appropriate, for each agency and fund affected. Explain the relationship between the amounts shown for expenditures and appropriations. Indicate whether the appropriation or a part of the appropriation is included in the executive budget or relates to a continuing appropriation.*

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**Agency:** ND Dept of Transportation

**Telephone:** 328-4375

**Date Prepared:** 01/17/2017

**2017 HOUSE TRANSPORTATION**

**HB 1287**

# 2017 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

**Transportation Committee**  
Fort Totten Room, State Capitol

HB 1287  
1/26/2017  
#27465

- Subcommittee  
 Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature

*Jeanette Cook*

### **Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:**

A bill relating to graduated driver licensing; relating to drivers' licenses issued to operators, restricted licenses, and class D instruction permit; and to provide a penalty.

### **Minutes:**

Attachment # 1-3

**Chairman Ruby** opened the hearing on HB 1287.

**Representative Keiser, District 47 in Bismarck**, introduced HB 1287. He spoke to support HB 1287 and explain the bill's intent. He asked that the policymakers of our state consider again the graduated driver's license program. We have implemented a graduated driver's license program. This bill brings to you a proposal adding more features to the program, in an attempt to implement in North Dakota what has been very successful in other states.

**Gene LaDoucer, AAA – The Auto Club Group - and team leader of the North Dakota Strategic Highway Safety Plan Young Driver Emphasis Team**, spoke to support HB 1287 and provided written testimony. See attachment #1, pages 1-6.

10:54

**Vice Chairman Rick C. Becker:** With the proposed steps, if a person is 16 or 17 would they hold the permit for 12 months?

**Gene LaDoucer:** Yes, that is correct. In this proposal no matter what age they start, it will be consistent for all ages.

**Vice Chairman Rick C. Becker:** Then an intermediate license for six months?

**Gene LaDoucer:** Correct.

**Vice Chairman Rick C. Becker:** So, what do you do when a seventeen-year-old starts the process, that is 18 months, before they get an unrestricted license?

**Gene LaDoucer:** If a seventeen-year-old came into the state and hadn't started the process, they would hold the permit for 12 months. When they turn eighteen, they would no longer need to go through the intermediate stage. They would go straight to an unrestricted license.

**Chairman Ruby:** Is that the way it is at sixteen currently?

**Gene LaDoucer:** Yes, and under the proposal it would be rolled back to six years and six months.

**Chairman Ruby** reviewed the changes in the bill from current law.

- Language about not carrying more than one non-adult passenger.
- To operate a vehicle after dark you would need someone who is 21 riding with you.
- Minor wears a safety belt.
- Upgrading to 18.
- Change in fines from \$20 to \$50 and 4 points to the license. Does that guarantee they lose their license?

**Gene LaDoucer:** No, they lose their license after they obtain six points.

**Representative Jones:** What was the reasoning for changing the passenger from 18 to 21 if they are going to be driving after dark?

**Gene LaDoucer:** Because when we looked at the state's crash date, there is a significant difference between an eighteen-year-old passenger and a twenty-one-year-old passenger. An eighteen-year-old passenger could be a friend, an older brother, or someone on a sports team that is a couple of grades ahead of them. They wouldn't actually be providing a supervisory role in that case. They may be goading them into doing something they shouldn't do. We find out that once we hit the twenty-one-year-old age group, they tend to be in a more protective capacity. We want to make sure there is a separation between the age of the new teen driver and the person providing supervision.

**Chairman Ruby:** To correct myself, anytime the teen driver needs supervision, it has to be a twenty-one-year-old, not just at night, correct?

**Gene Ladoucer:** Correct

**Representative Jones:** Did you get input from people in rural North Dakota? It is convenient for people with kids in sporting events to ride together to get to and from places.

**Gene LaDoucer:** I did not get direct feedback from rural legislators this time. However, going back to 2011, during that testimony, the North Dakota Farm Bureau came in and testified in support of passenger restriction. They understand that it is a significant risk to allow a number of teens in the car. For that six months the teen will still be able to drive to and from all the activities they need to go to, including one buddy or team member.

**Vice Chairman Rick C. Becker:** If this bill passes, your job with this bill is to help insure safety on the roads. You recognize that teens are more dangerous drivers and are in more crashes. If this bill becomes law, the early twenties are nearly as dangerous, based on insurance. Wouldn't it make sense to restrict up into the mid-twenties to make the roads even safer yet?

**Gene LaDoucer:** Your point is well taken. It is true that young drivers consistently carry a higher risk through the age of about 25. However, the reason behind the risk changes from a new driver to a driver has had their license for about two years. This bill is addressing the experience issue with the very newest of our drivers. For the first 18 to 24 months of their experience, the number one reason behind the crashes is the lack of experience. We are trying to give them the experience with less risk. Night time driving is a high risk time. Additional passengers are high risk. Once you get to the older ages, other things start to creep in: higher speeds, alcohol, and those types of things. Those things result in crashes. Those types of things are outside of this bill or even the licensing process.

**Vice Chairman Rick C. Becker:** I am looking at a chart of motor vehicle fatality rates. The teens actually cross with the twenties. I am wondering where we stop.

**Gene LaDoucer:** I am familiar with the chart you are seeing. One of the issues with looking at that chart, is that while the number of crashes cross at that point, the ratio of the crashes does not. There are far fewer drivers between the ages of 14-17 than there are from 18-25. If you actually look at the ratio of crashes per driving population, the youngest population is still about twice as likely to be involved in a fatal injury crash as the older drivers are. The raw numbers will indicate that the older drivers are in the majority of the crashes.

**Vice Chairman Rick C. Becker:** It does indicate that it is per 1000 of that group, so they have taken that in to account in the chart, and it still crosses.

**Gene LaDoucer:** Maybe I am not as familiar with the chart as I thought I was. However, this is the licensing process, and we can't address the older drivers within the licensing process.

**Sydney Wild, Century High School's SADD chapter,** spoke to support HB 1287 and provided written testimony. See attachment # 2, pages 1-2.  
27:49

**Representative Nelson:** Things are different in some areas of the state than others. You have local services. But the department has decided that due to budget restraints, it will no longer have local driver's license services. How would your parents feel if they had to take three trips to Minot with you during working and school hours to get your license?

**Sydney Wild:** My parents would probably be okay with it, considering that it would be an extra step to ensure my safety and the others on the road.

**Representative Nelson:** Due to the time it takes to go through the process, you are going to be driving in winter conditions, maybe even to take your test. How do you feel about that?

**Sydney Wild:** It would give me good practice with trained adults and help me expand my knowledge of how to drive on the road.

**Chairman Ruby:** We will look this over, we have had discussions on this before, and have made changes in the past. When you spoke, you consistently referred to what your parents did. Do you think that couldn't have happened at fifteen, that it is better at sixteen, that they

trained you to be a good driver? Do you understand that sometimes it is the parents, rather than the government, that actually look out for your safety?

**Sydney Wild:** Yes, I am very fortunate to have the parents that I do have. The restrictions that they place on me do keep me safe.

**Chairman Ruby:** I think they are doing a fine job.

**Adam Foerderer, a junior at Century High School,** spoke to support HB 1287 and provided written testimony. See attachment #3, pages 1-2. 34:28

**Vice Chairman Rick C. Becker:** Adam and Sydney, I may disagree with you, but you did a very good job, I commend you, and respect you for giving your opinion.

**Representative Jones:** You did an excellent job.

There was no further support for HB 1287.  
There was no opposition to HB 1287.

The hearing on HB 1287 was closed.

# 2017 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Transportation Committee  
Fort Totten Room, State Capitol

HB 1287  
2/3/2017  
#27886

- Subcommittee  
 Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature

*Jeanette Cook*

**Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:** A bill relating to graduated driver licensing; relating to drivers' licenses issued to operators, restricted licenses, and class D instruction permit; and to provide a penalty.

**Minutes:**

**Chairman Ruby** brought HB 1287 back before the committee.

**Vice Chairman Rick C. Becker** moved a **DO NOT PASS** on HB 1287.  
**Representative Weisz** seconded the motion.

**Vice Chairman Rick C. Becker:** I think this is just too much. There may have been some benefits when this came before us before. I think we adjusted it to make it somewhat more reasonable. We are just adding on and on. We are not giving people credit as they enter into young adulthood. It goes too far for me.

**Chairman Ruby:** I will support the motion. I agree, I think it is too much.

**Representative Nelson:** I can see some of the advantages with this bill of making things more uniform, so that things just don't change entirely at age 16. But, my concern is that the Department is not going to be offering services in our area. This will basically be a lot of steps getting people to take a half to a full day off of work for each one of these steps. I can't support it for that reason.

**Chairman Ruby:** They have bumped up the fines and the points as well.

**A roll call vote was taken on HB 1287: Aye 9 Nay 3 Absent 2**  
**The motion carried.**

**Representative Nelson will carry HB 1287.**

Date: 2-3-17  
 Roll Call Vote #: 1

**2017 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE  
 ROLL CALL VOTES  
 BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 287**

House Transportation Committee

Subcommittee

Amendment LC# or Description: \_\_\_\_\_

- Recommendation:  Adopt Amendment  
 Do Pass  Do Not Pass  Without Committee Recommendation  
 As Amended  Rerefer to Appropriations  
 Place on Consent Calendar  
 Other Actions:  Reconsider  \_\_\_\_\_

Motion Made By Becker Seconded By Weisz

Representatives	Yes	No	Representatives	Yes	No
Chairman Dan Ruby	✓		Rep. Gretchen Dobervich	A	
Vice Chair. Rick C. Becker	✓		Rep. Marvin Nelson	✓	
Rep. Bert Anderson	A				
Rep. Jim Grueneich		✓			
Rep. Terry Jones	✓				
Rep. Emily O'Brien		✓			
Rep. Mark Owens	✓				
Rep. Gary Paur	✓				
Rep. Randy Schobinger	✓				
Rep. Gary Sukut		✓			
Rep. Robin Weisz	✓				
Rep. Greg Westlind	✓				

Total (Yes) 9 No 3

Absent 2

Floor Assignment Nelson

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE**

**HB 1287: Transportation Committee (Rep. D. Ruby, Chairman)** recommends **DO NOT PASS** (9 YEAS, 3 NAYS, 2 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). HB 1287 was placed on the Eleventh order on the calendar.

2017 TESTIMONY

HB 1287

**Testimony in Support of HB 1287**  
**House Transportation Committee – Jan. 26, 2017**  
**Gene LaDoucer, AAA-The Auto Club Group**

HB 1287  
1-26-17  
#1  
Page 1

Good morning, Chairman Ruby and members of the committee. My name is Gene LaDoucer, and I represent AAA, North America's largest motoring and leisure travel organization. I am also team lead of the North Dakota Strategic Highway Safety Plan Young Driver Emphasis Team.

Thanks to changes made to the licensing system during the 2011 legislative session (HB 1256) fewer of our state's children have been injured or killed in traffic crashes. A review of state crash data through 2015 shows fatal and injury crashes involving 15-year-old drivers are down 23 percent. Nighttime crashes involving 15-year-old drivers are down 29 percent. And the ratio of injury crashes involving 14-17 year-olds to share of licensed drivers is down 12 percent. These numbers are impressive, but they can—and should—be better. Amendments made to the original bill in 2011 left many young drivers learning to drive outside the newly implemented three-stage licensing process. This process, often referred to as Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL), is largely credited with significant reductions in teen crashes across the country since 1996. And it is now shown to work in North Dakota. We must ensure the system works for all our children.

Whether intentional or not, the 2011 amendments created three distinct paths to obtaining a license for teens (see attachment). Teens who receive a permit at age 14 progress through three stages, which include an intermediate license, the hallmark of a GDL system. Teens who receive a permit at age 15 progress through a path that does not include the intermediate license phase. And finally, teens who obtain a permit at age 16 or older follow a process that doesn't even include driver education. Fifteen-year-olds with a driver's license (not a permit) are the only teens receiving the full protective benefits implemented in 2012. It's not surprising that crashes involving this group have shown the greatest decline.

It's important to note that only about one-third of North Dakota teens obtain a permit at age 14. As a result, two in three teens are learning to driver under a less-than-optimal licensing system. This bill will help ensure North Dakota has a system that works for all new minor drivers.

The objective of HB 1287 is threefold:

- 1) Create consistency in the process for all new minor drivers. The process must include the intermediate license phase that promotes experience and responsibility under conditions of less risk.
- 2) Address the risk passengers create for new drivers by including a limit on the number of passengers during the intermediate license phase.
- 3) Require the intermediate licensing phase be completed without license cancellation or conviction of a traffic offense carrying a penalty of more than one point.

As you will note (see attachment), in creating a more consistent process for all new minor drivers, HB 1287 would allow for a teen to obtain an unrestricted license six months earlier than currently allowed (15 ½ versus 16). There is a risk to allowing that and it's not ideal. National standards set the age at 17 for an unrestricted license. But acknowledging the desire of rural and farm families to get their teens licensed as early as possible, we feel the additional provisions included in the bill

would provide for a solid licensing system. An option for the committee's consideration is to move back the earliest age to receive a permit from the current age of 14 to 14-years, six months.

A limit on the number of passengers during the intermediate license phase is needed to address a significant risk to new drivers. Distractions are a major problem for teen drivers. A recent AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety study found distractions are a contributing factor in 60 percent of teen crashes in the United States. Among the distractions identified, teen passengers were the top distraction. Cell phones were the second most cited distraction. Analysis of North Dakota crash data also tells us that compared to driving alone, the teen fatality rate more than triples with one passenger age 13-17. It nearly quadruples with two or more passengers. Much like the night-driving provision is working, so can a limit on passengers during the short-term intermediate license phase.

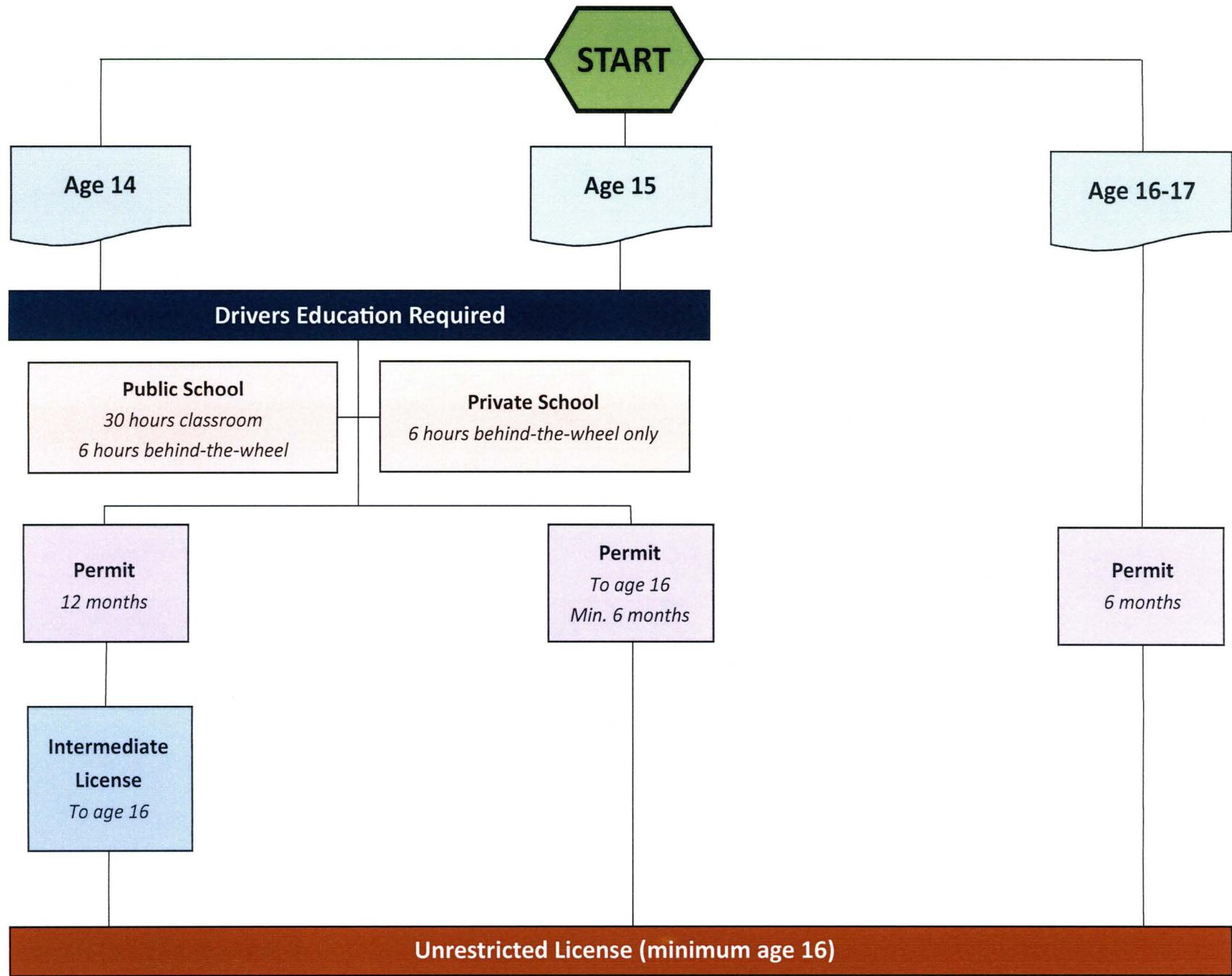
Finally, "graduation" from an intermediate license to an unrestricted license should not be awarded based on time or age alone, but also a demonstration of responsibility and respect for the law. HB 1287 would allow for some mistakes to be made, but delay licensure for those committing more serious traffic safety infractions.

The licensing of young drivers presents a challenge for all of us. Although the vast majority of teens are responsible and caring, they are all inexperienced drivers. The fact remains that the roadways are the most dangerous place for them to be, and we owe it to them to properly equip them to meet that challenge. And most North Dakotans understand the challenge and support changes outlined in this bill. A AAA survey of North Dakota residents completed last fall indicates 78 percent support a three-phased licensing system for teens under age 18. Furthermore, 73 percent support a limit of no or one non-family teen passenger during the intermediate license phase.

It is clear we're on the right track with improving the state's licensing system for teen drivers. The track now necessitates inclusion of all new minor drivers within the three-phased system. There is a better way. Now it's time to implement it.

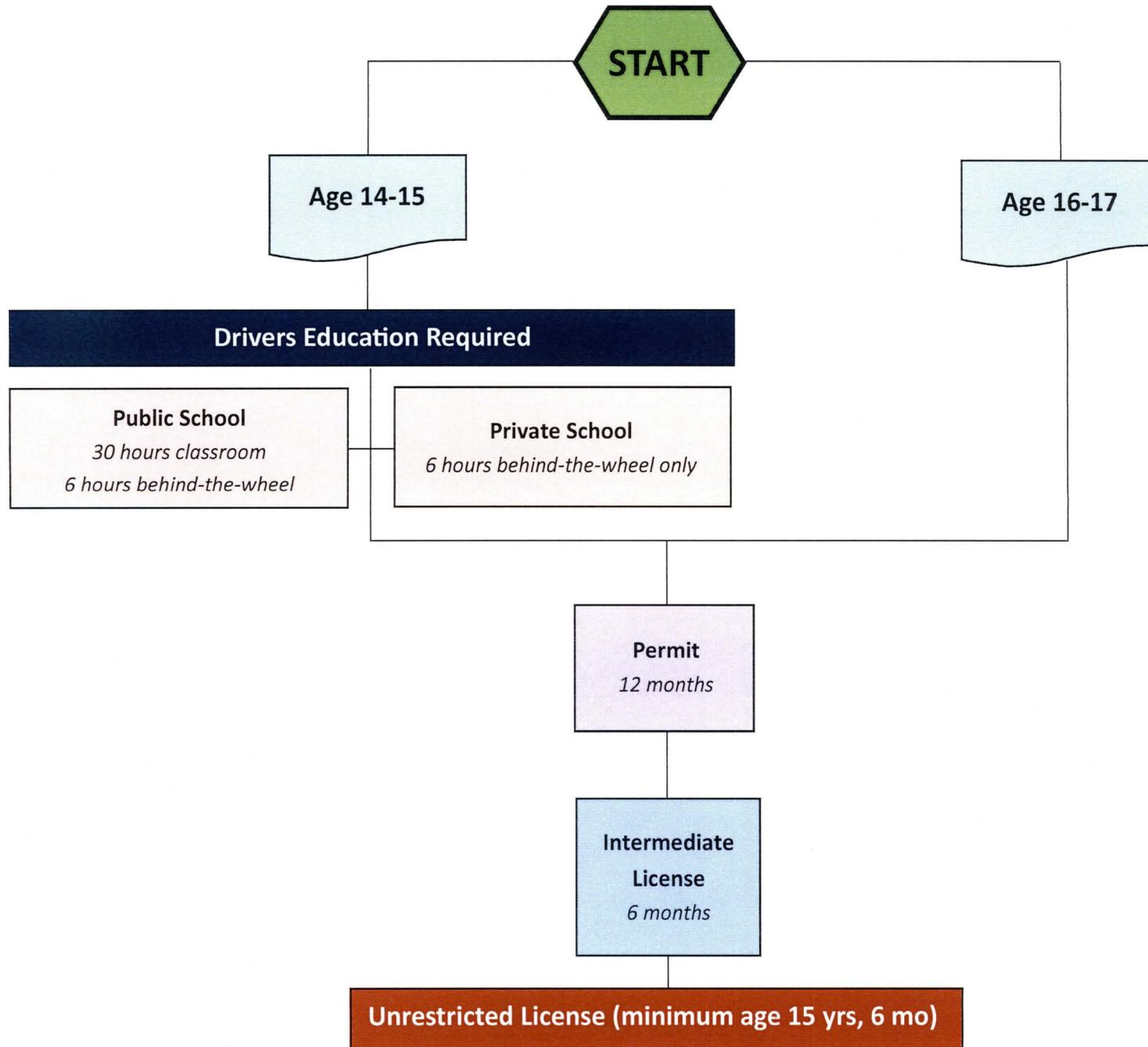
Mr. Chairman, and members of the committee, we owe it to our children to provide a licensing environment where they can develop into safe and responsible drivers in a manner that reduces their risk and the risk to others. On behalf of AAA, The Auto Club Group, and the Young Driver Emphasis Team, I urge a "Do Pass" recommendation on HB 1287.

# Current Steps to Licensing Minor Drivers



D.3

# Proposed Steps to Licensing Minor Drivers



P.4



# TEEN LICENSING

## WORK IN PROGRESS

### Current Policy

- 12-month permit for 14 year olds
- 6-12 month permit for 15 year olds
- 6-month permit if over age 16
- Teens under age 16 progress through an intermediate stage of licensing
- During the intermediate stage, nighttime driving restrictions apply
- Only teens under age 16 are required to complete drivers education

A progressive licensing system passed by the 2011 North Dakota legislature appears to be helping:

Fatal and injury crashes involving 15-year-old drivers\* **↓ 23%**

**↓ 29%** Nighttime crashes involving 15 year-old drivers (9 p.m. - 5 a.m.)\*

Ratio of injury crashes involving 14-17 year-olds to share of licensed drivers\* **↓ 12%**

*\* 4-year average from 2008-2011 time period compared to 4-year average from 2012-2015 time period.*

# CAUTION

- ◆ North Dakota teens are **more than twice** as likely to be involved in a crash than older drivers.
- ◆ It's estimated **that just one-third** of teens begin the licensing process at age 14.
- ◆ Compared to driving alone, the teen fatality rate **more than triples with one passenger** age 13-17. It **nearly quadruples** with two or more passengers.
- ◆ In 2015, the ratio of crashes involving 14-17 year-old drivers to share of licensed drivers **increased 15%**.

### Recommendations



- ◆ 12-month permit for all new drivers under age 18.
- ◆ 6-month intermediate stage for all new drivers under age 18.
- ◆ Include passenger limit during the intermediate stage of licensing.
- ◆ Must complete 6 months without license cancelation or conviction of a traffic offense with a penalty of more than one point.

## Teen Licensing: Three-Stage System Stressing Experience and Responsibility

	Current North Dakota Policy	Proposed North Dakota Policy
<b>Stages</b>	3-stage process for all novice drivers <b>under age 16</b>	3-stage process for all novice drivers <b>under age 18</b>
<b>Learner's Permit</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least 14 years old</li> <li>• 12-months holding period if under age 16; 6-months if <b>age 16 or older</b></li> <li>• Driver education required if under age 16</li> <li>• Minimum of 50 hours of supervised practice</li> <li>• Must be accompanied by a licensed driver at least <b>age 18</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No change</li> <li>• 12-month holding period if <b>under age 18</b></li> <li>• No change</li> <li>• No change</li> <li>• Must be accompanied by a licensed driver at least <b>age 21</b></li> </ul>
<b>Intermediate License</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6-month holding period if <b>under age 16</b></li> <li>• Night driving restricted between 9 p.m. or sunset, whichever is later, and 5 a.m. for 6 months (with exceptions)</li> <li>• No policy on number of teen passengers</li> <li>• No cell phone use</li> <li>• No requirement to remain crash or conviction free</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6-month holding period if <b>under age 18</b></li> <li>• No change</li> <li>• No more than 1 non-family passenger under age 18 for 6 months</li> <li>• No change</li> <li>• Must complete 6 months without license cancellation or conviction of a traffic offense carrying a penalty of more than one point</li> </ul>
<b>Standard License</b>	Minimum age of <b>16</b>	Minimum age of <b>15 years, 6 months</b>

*per*

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**Testimony in Support of HB 1287**  
**House Transportation Committee-Jan. 26, 2017**  
**Sydney Wild, Century High School Student**

Good morning Chairman Ruby and committee members. My name is Sydney Wild and I am here on behalf of Century High School's SADD chapter, regarding House Bill No. 1287.

As a teenager, getting your license is a feeling of freedom. You look forward to the day where your mom no longer has to drive you around anymore, and your mom does too! But neither you nor your mother would be excited if you both knew how dangerous it was for you to get your license without the proper training and experience. Last year on March 2nd, 2016 I turned 15 years old. Three months after my 15th birthday, I received my instruction permit. The last 8 months I have spent many hours behind the wheel with my parents. On January 30th I will start my driver's education class, and I am already scheduled to take my official driver's test on March 7th, five days after I turn 16. The reality of today's law is that I could take my test 6 months after getting my permit at age 16, and immediately be awarded an unrestricted license. I would not have to take driver's education of any kind, no intermediate license, no restrictions and limited experience. How does that sound to you? Does that make you feel safe?

My parent's and I made the decision to sign me up for a driver's education class as we wanted to ensure my safety and the safety of other drivers on the road. How does that one day between being 15 and 16 make me a better and more qualified driver? How can that one day make so much of a difference that it can determine if I need professional guidance or not? How does that one day give me less of a chance of getting into a car crash?

Last week I made an error in judgement while driving. I hadn't driven in two months before then due to the weather conditions. I have had my permit for eight months and I have driven many times before this incident, yet I still messed up. Luckily, my mom was sitting right next to me and guided me through it all and helped me realize what I had done wrong and what I could have done differently. A 12 month permit will give every teen driving experience in all weather conditions. One person who doesn't know what they are doing can cause a lot of damage, and I ask you if that is that a risk you are willing to take for you and your families? Students still look up to adults like you every

day and trust that you are helping us make the right decisions on whether or not something is safe for us. That's why I am speaking to you today. I am challenging you to question if you all truly think that the different rules for different ages are actually keeping me and you safe every day that young drivers are on the road?

Other than not having consistent restrictions on night driving, North Dakota's law also allows kids to have as many seat belted passengers as their car fits the day they get their license at age 15. When I had come to the age where most of my friends started being able to drive on their own, my parents informed me that I was not allowed to ride with any of my friends until they had been independently driving for at least three months. This is a rule that they had enforced with my older sister and decided to carry on down to me. At first I thought it was unreasonable and did not like it because I felt that I was missing out on so much fun. Now looking back on it I respect my parents so much for giving me that restriction. Studies show that the more passengers in a car driven by a teen will increase the risk of a crash resulting injury or death. One less person in the car is one less distraction. I can tell you right now that if a passenger restriction is added, teenagers will not like it but it will help save lives. Parents will also be a big part of it and if they are properly informed they can help enforce it because there is no way for a police officer or someone of authority to know how old someone is or how long they have had a license just by looking in their car. But because the rules are different for each age level, parents are confused about the rules. Having a consistent process for each age level will ensure that all parents and teens clearly understand what the rules are. I can honestly say that neither Adam, sitting here next to me, nor I were fully aware of the rules about licenses and permits going into this.

As teenagers, we do not necessarily like restrictions. Any of you that have or are raising us know that! But please, we are counting on you to set legislation in place to keep us safe. To prevent car crashes that could result in terrible injury or even death. I hope you will consider passing HD 1287 for these reasons.

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Page 1

**Testimony in Support of HB 1287**  
**House Transportation Committee-Jan. 26, 2017**  
**Adam Foerderer, Century High School Student**

Good morning Chairman Ruby and committee members. My name is Adam Foerderer and I am junior at Century High School. I am here seeking your support for House Bill 1287.

Even though it feels like a long time, I have only been driving for 3 years. Through my experience as a young driver, I have realized that there are far too many uneducated and unskilled teen drivers that share our roads. In my own past, I was lucky enough to have my parents give me great guidance on how to be safe on the road. I spent a full year driving with them in all kinds of road and weather conditions when i had my permit at age 14. Not only that, but I have taken the behind the wheel course to better improve my driving skills. I have been behind the wheel of various implements from a dump truck, a tractor, a four wheeler and a boat to name a few. As a young teenage boy I obviously like cars and am fortunate enough to have a Dad who also likes cars. Two years ago he surprised us and purchased a 2011 Camaro SS. I seriously screamed out loud when I saw it. When you get behind the wheel of a sports car it is necessary to be an experienced driver. Especially when it has over 400 horse power. I didn't come here to brag about what's in my family's possession, but to let you know that if my parents hadn't been fully involved by instituting family rules, I would be less knowledgeable and less experienced driver, no matter what what type of vehicle I am operating.

As a 14 year old, I myself went through the 3 phase system of obtaining a driver's license. I had a great experience with my behind the wheel instructor. He is a police officer, and he made an impact on me about road safety. The thought of a 16 year old not having the same instruction before taking on our city roads and highways really scares me. And in my opinion it should scare you as well. The facts are that North Dakota teens are more than twice as likely to be involved in a crash than older drivers. The good news is that due to the 2011 Graduated Drivers License requirements for 14 year old's, fatal injuries and car crashes have gone down 23%! We also had restrictions on nighttime driving, what also could be called joy-riding. You limited the time of day and night that young drivers can be on the road. So the legislation you passed in 2011 is working and you have helped save lives! But more work needs to be done. The same rules and regulations that I had placed on me when I received my permit at 14, should also apply to 15 and 16 year olds.

My peers and I are distracted by all sorts of things when we drive: music, bluetooth, texting, facetime, and the list can go on. Imagine these distractions magnified with 4 friends in the car as well. That is just terrifying. By passing HB 1287, you will address a common distraction: the number of friends in the car of an inexperienced driver.

Through experience, and the constant talking to from my parents (ranging from a nice discussion to the promise of taking my vehicle away), has made me a "distraction free" driver. It is important

for the safety of my peers and the members of our community that all students, whether they are 14, 15 or 16 have the same steps to gaining a license. Not everyone has parents that will teach them the rules of the road. Like Sydney said earlier, we may not always like rules, but we are counting on you to help keep us safe. Please, pass this very important and life saving legislation. Pass House Bill 1287 and keep me, my peers, your family and the community safe. Thank you