

Testimony in Support of House Bill 1290

Mr. Chairman and members of the Senate Transportation Committee, thank you for allowing me to speak in favor of House Bill 1290.

My name is Justin Kristan, I am the Founder and Executive Director of the North Dakota Active Transportation Alliance, North Dakota's only statewide active transportation advocacy organization (a registered 501c3 charitable non-profit) and have been an avid bicyclist since 1982. I have been a member of the League of American Bicyclists since 2004 and have been a certified League Cycling Instructor (LCI) since 2004. The LCI certification course is a three-day course which prepares an individual to teach adults and children the skills necessary to operate their bicycles on roadways safely and legally. I also hold a Master's Degree in urban and regional planning with a specialization in bicyclist and pedestrian planning and facility design.

I have driven my bicycle for recreational and utilitarian purposes since 1982. I have been fortunate to have not experienced any hit and runs with motorists. I have experienced numerous close passes by motorists at speeds above 25MPH. The experience is shocking and wind conditions in North Dakota can make the impending close pass inaudible.

As bicycling becomes more popular in North Dakota and more bicyclists take to North Dakota's roadways it is imperative that the State make roadways safer for bicyclists. A simple and measured approach is to add a safe passing law for bicyclists. If codified into state law; a three-foot passing law becomes an effective educational tool for new and experienced motorists.

Safe passing laws specifically related to bicyclists are found in thirty-two (32) states. North Dakota does not have such a law. Bicyclists are vulnerable roadway users and recognition of this fact should be codified into state law in North Dakota. A three-foot passing law is a good place to begin the shift toward a more equitable roadway system in North Dakota.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in favor of House Bill 1290.

Respectfully,

Justin Kristan

Founder and Executive Director,

North Dakota Active Transportation Alliance

A 501c3 charitable non-profit