

Testimony Prepared for the
Senate Transportation Committee

January 7, 2021

By: Jason Benson, Cass County Engineer



**RE: Opposition to SB 2026 – Road Train
Excess Limit Authorization**

Chairman Clemens and Senate Transportation Committee members, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on SB 2026. I am Jason Benson, the Cass County Highway Engineer, and I also serve as the legislative committee chair for the ND Association of County Engineers. I am here to oppose the bill as proposed.

The road infrastructure that is used today has not been designed to accommodate the latest size and load limits. Although our members understand the per axel weight limits under the proposed “road train” bill would not increase, there would be a significant change to weight distributions on bridge infrastructure. Also, local road infrastructure would have no possible way to accommodate turning radiuses or turn outs with such long loads. Having longer and heavier units on these roads will also increase the safety risk for our traveling public, which is unnecessary.

Under the current bill, it appears the Governor would have the authority to designate certain roads to act as pilot sites for road trains. Because there are no limitations for this experiment to occur on only Federal/State roads, it is necessary for local government to have authority to approve pilot sites for local roads. Without local oversight and expertise of the local transportation system, our county and township roads and bridges could fail.

Furthermore, without an independent evaluation focusing on the costs and safety factors of road trains on the transportation system, it will be difficult if not impossible, to determine the outcome of the pilot program. State appropriation for the fiscal impact of the pilot program needs to be considered.

Chairman Clemens and committee members, I want to stress our current opposition of the bill is concerned with the lack of local oversight, independent evaluation, and infrastructure and safety concerns. NDACE opposes the bill as written.