

2023 HOUSE TRANSPORTATION

HB 1295

2023 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Transportation Committee
Room JW327E, State Capitol

HB 1295
1/26/2023

A bill relating to number plates.

Chairman D. Ruby opened the hearing at 3:20 PM.

Members present: Chairman Ruby, Vice Chairman Grueneich, Representatives Anderson, Christensen, Dyk, Frelich, Hauck, Koppelman, Murphy, Timmons, Wagner, Weisz, Dakane. Member absent: Representative Dobervich.

Discussion Topics:

- Front license plates

Representative Weisz verbally introduced the bill in support.

Brad Schaffer, Interim Director of Motor Vehicle with North Dakota Department of Transportation, neutral testimony (#17053).

Wade Kadrmas, Safety and Education Officer with North Dakota Highway Patrol, neutral testimony (#16934).

Jeff Solemsaas, Lieutenant and Traffic Commander for the City of Bismarck Police Department, testified in opposition (#17228).

Additional written testimony:

Jesse Hoffart, testimony in support #16705.

Chairman D. Ruby closed the hearing at 3:47 PM.

Mary Brucker, Committee Clerk

2023 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Transportation Committee
Room JW327E, State Capitol

HB 1295
2/2/2023

A bill relating to number plates.

Chairman D. Ruby opened the meeting at 10:05 AM.

Members present: Chairman Ruby, Vice Chairman Grueneich, Representatives Anderson, Christensen, Dyk, Frelich, Hauck, Koppelman, Murphy, Timmons, Wagner, Weisz, Dakane, Dobervich. No members absent.

Discussion Topics:

- Front license plates
- Committee vote

Representative Koppelman moved a Do Pass.

Representative Christensen seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

Representatives	Vote
Representative Dan Ruby	Y
Representative Jim Grueneich	Y
Representative Karen A. Anderson	N
Representative Cole Christensen	Y
Representative Hamida Dakane	Y
Representative Gretchen Dobervich	Y
Representative Scott Dyk	Y
Representative Kathy Frelich	Y
Representative Dori Hauck	N
Representative Ben Koppelman	Y
Representative Eric James Murphy	Y
Representative Kelby Timmons	Y
Representative Scott Wagner	Y
Representative Robin Weisz	Y

Motion Carried 12-2-0

Representative Dyk Carrier

Chairman D. Ruby adjourned at 10:16 AM.

Mary Brucker, Committee Clerk

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

HB 1295: Transportation Committee (Rep. D. Ruby, Chairman) recommends **DO PASS** (12 YEAS, 2 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). HB 1295 was placed on the Eleventh order on the calendar.

2023 SENATE TRANSPORTATION

HB 1295

2023 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Transportation Committee
Fort Totten Room, State Capitol

HB 1295
3/2/2023

A BILL for an Act relating to number plates.

1:16 PM Chairman Clemens called the hearing to order.

Chairman Clemens, Senators Conley, Larsen, Paulson, Rummel were present.

Discussion Topics:

- Special plates
- Visibility
- Criminals
- Tools
- Identifier
- Adhesive brackets
- Prepay
- Drive offs
- Research

1:16 PM Representative Weiss, introduced the bill. No written testimony.

1:24 PM Jeff Solemsaas, Lieutenant, Bismarck Police Department, testified in opposition.
#21789

1:30 PM Jason Ziegler, Chief of Police for the City of Mandan, President of the Chiefs of Police Association of North Dakota, testified. #21791

1:34 PM Tom Iverson, Chief of Operations, North Dakota Highway Patrol, testified in opposition. #21738

1:39 PM Mike Rud, President of the ND Petroleum Marketers Association, testified in opposition. #21801

1:44 PM Stephanie Dassinger Engebretson, Chiefs of Police Association of North Dakota, testified in opposition verbally.

1:45 PM Calvin Benson, North Dakota Peace Officers Association, testified in opposition verbally.

1:45 PM Tomas Iverson, Chief of Operations, North Dakota Highway Patrol, verbally provided additional information.

1:46 PM Matt Bjornson, Bjornson Oil Company, testified online in opposition. #21772

1:49 PM Brad Schaffer, Interim Director of Motor Vehicle, ND Department of Transportation, testified neutral. #21565

Additional written testimony:

Dave Draovitch, Bismarck Chief of Police, #21517

Sheriff Andy Schneider, Grand Forks County Sheriff's Office, #21616

1:51 PM Chairman Clemens adjourned the hearing.

Patricia Wilkens, Committee Clerk

2023 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Transportation Committee
Fort Totten Room, State Capitol

HB 1295
3/2/2023

A BILL for an Act relating to number plates.

1:59 PM Chairman Clemens called the hearing to order.

Chairman Clemens, Senators Conley, Larsen, Paulson, Rummel are present.

Discussion Topics:

- Front license plates
- Study
- Research
- Amendment
- Empower DOT

Committee discussion.

2:04 PM Chair Clemens adjourned the meeting.

Patricia Wilkens, Committee Clerk

2023 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Transportation Committee
Fort Totten Room, State Capitol

HB 1295
3/9/2023

Relating to number plates.

10:07 AM Chairman Clemens opens meeting.

Senators Present: **Clemens, Conley, Paulson.**

Senators absent: **Larsen, Rummel**

Discussion Topics:

- Front license plate
- Fines and points
- Law enforcement

10:10 AM Jacob Jones, State Highway Trooper, provided neutral information and answered questions. No written testimony.

10:13 AM Chairman Clemens adjourns meeting.

Nathan Liesen, Committee Clerk

2023 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Transportation Committee Fort Totten Room, State Capitol

HB 1295
3/17/2023

Relating to number plates.

9:30 AM Chairman Clemens opened the meeting.

Chairman Clemens, Senators Conley, Larsen, Paulson, Rummel were present.

Discussion Topics:

- Committee Action

9:35 AM Senator Rummel moved Do Not Pass.

9:35 AM Senator D. Larsen seconded.

Roll call vote.

Senators	Vote
Senator David A. Clemens	Y
Senator Cole Conley	N
Senator Doug Larsen	Y
Senator Bob Paulson	N
Senator Dean Rummel	Y

Do Not Pass Motion Passed 3-2-0

Senator Rummel will carry the bill.

9:36 AM Chairman Clemens closed the meeting.

Nathan Liesen, Committee Clerk

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

HB 1295: Transportation Committee (Sen. Clemens, Chairman) recommends **DO NOT PASS** (3 YEAS, 2 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). HB 1295 was placed on the Fourteenth order on the calendar. This bill does not affect workforce development.

TESTIMONY

HB 1295

January 25, 2023

Jesse Hoffart
West Fargo, ND 58078

Dear Members of the House Transportation Committee:

I write in support of HB 1295 and its removal of the front license plate requirements on motor vehicles in North Dakota.

As automakers design vehicles, they continue to work towards improved aerodynamics and performance with an end goal that yields better fuel economy and attractive designs. Often times these vehicles are manufactured with no consideration for a front license plate due to these design goals. Important safety technology such as proximity and traffic sensors are present on the front grills of modern vehicles. These sensors can be impeded or damaged by attempts to install a front plate. Another consideration is airflow to critical engine components such as radiator and intercoolers are also impeded by front license plates.

Currently there are 21 other states that do not require a front license plate. Alaska and Ohio being the latest to do so. Referring to Ohio's decision to stop requiring front plates starting July 1st of 2020, trooper Jessica McIntyre, spokesperson for the Ohio state Highway Patrol, admitted that doing away with the requirement will be a "breath of fresh air" for motorists and later she said "We adapt to changes. The patrol does and other agencies as well. So it doesn't pose a problem." So, if 21 other states have been able to adapt to the removal of front license plates I believe North Dakota can as well.

With so many other states not requiring a front license plate and some vehicles not being designed for them, buying a vehicle produced for North Dakota with a front license bracket could result in damage to the vehicle as in a lot of cases holes have to be drilled into the front bumper cover to accommodate the front license plate. This can result in a lower resale value for those consumers and business owners if they should happen to sell their vehicle to someone in a state that does not require a front license plate. It's an economic burden for the North Dakota consumer and dealership owners in more ways than one.

Money and natural resources will be conserved when a single plate is produced and delivered to car owners. There is an ever-accumulating amount of gas that is burnt up needlessly from the reduced aerodynamics from front license plates. The aluminum in the plates goes waste as they are thrown into landfills. Both gas and aluminum are non-renewable natural resources that we will never see again. Removing the requirement for the front license plate in North Dakota will help conserve both, thus helping the environment.

Please support HB 1295 and its removal of the front license plate requirements on motor vehicles in North Dakota.

Jesse Hoffart
West Fargo, ND

**68th Legislative Assembly**Testimony in **Neutral** of**House Bill No. 1295****House Transportation Committee**

January 26, 2023

TESTIMONY OF

Sergeant Wade Kadrmas

Good morning, Chairman Ruby and members of the House Transportation Committee, my name is Wade Kadrmas, and I am the Safety and Education Officer for the North Dakota Highway Patrol. I am here today to provide neutral testimony on House Bill 1295 which would remove the requirement for a front license plate in North Dakota.

From a law enforcement standpoint, a front license plate serves a legitimate purpose. For example, someone who witnesses a crime or is the victim of a crime often tries to obtain a license plate number or at least a partial license plate number to relay a vehicle description to law enforcement.

Many types of incidents could benefit from license plate descriptions including:

- Attempt to locate calls such as a missing person or suicidal subject
- Gas drive offs
- Crashes involving a vehicle that flees the scene
- Stolen vehicles
- Violent incidents such as shootings
- Road rage incidents
- Reckless driver calls
- Amber, Silver, and Blue Alerts
- Rolling domestic violence calls
- Trespassing situations
- Assaults
- Burglaries

Law enforcement officers across the state respond to these types of incidents on a daily basis and rely on license plate numbers as one method to quickly identify a suspect vehicle. Officers are frequently checking front license plates on passing vehicles during each shift.

From a highway patrol standpoint, our agency enforces registration violations as well. Everyone who operates a vehicle on a public roadway is expected to register their vehicle, but the fact is that failing to register a vehicle is a common violation. Front license plates help with enforcement.

It's understandable that someone who owns an expensive vehicle wouldn't want to drill holes into their front bumper, but there are options to attach license plates without causing any damage such as adhesive license plate brackets.

States like California are pilot testing license plate wraps which are installed and removed like graphics on our patrol vehicles. California's DOT authorizes a vendor, and interested customers pay a fee of \$120 to purchase their own front plate so there is no cost to the state. This would be similar to purchasing an antique plate in North Dakota which costs \$100 or a collector plate which costs \$160.

A front license plate may not be aesthetically pleasing, but it does serve a purpose, especially helping members of the public and law enforcement identify potential vehicles involved in a crime. It's difficult to see a rear license plate in a rear-view mirror after a vehicle passes, and it's impossible at night. Even the color, make, and model of a vehicle can be difficult to decipher at night, so a front license plate is beneficial.

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

**House Bill No. 1295****House Transportation Committee**

327E | January 26, 2023, 3 p.m.

Brad Schaffer, Motor Vehicle

Good morning, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. I'm Brad Schaffer, Interim Director of Motor Vehicle for the North Dakota Department of Transportation (NDDOT). I'm here to provide information on HB 1295.

House Bill 1295 would require the Motor Vehicle Division of the NDDOT to issue one plate per registered motor vehicle. Currently, two plates are issued. Each year an estimated 126,000 sets of plates are issued. All license plates are manufactured at Rough Rider Industries, a division of the North Dakota Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. Currently we are charged \$5.95 for a set of passenger plates and \$6.45 for special request plates. Issuing only one plate for each motor vehicle would reduce the cost by \$1 with no savings in shipping.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes my testimony. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

January 24, 2023

From: Lt. Jeff Solemsaas

To: House Transportation Committee

Re: HB 1295

Chairman Ruby and Representatives of the House Transportation,

My name is Jeff Solemsaas, I'm here to voice our opposition to HB 1295 relating to the number of license plates assigned to a motor vehicle. The Bismarck Police Department is strongly against this proposal.

I have been a law enforcement officer for almost 30 years, for the last 10 I have been assigned as the Traffic Commander for the City of Bismarck Police Department. License plate provide a valuable tool to identify vehicles. By removing the front license plate the chances of identifying an owner is greatly reduced.

Our officers frequently rely on the ability to identify vehicle that are involved in a variety of activity, both criminal and traffic related. By allowing the owners of vehicles to only display one license plate will greatly diminish the ability of the officers to identify the owner of a vehicle. I have seen numerous reports in which an officer was able to locate a vehicle that was involved in a hit and run either through the use of video cameras or witness'. Often it is the front license plate that is either captured on a video system or the witness is able to see the front license plate of a vehicle that is fleeing the scene. By reducing the ability to identify vehicles involved in hit and runs the chances of successfully locating a suspect vehicle are greatly diminished.

Obviously, these scenarios also apply to criminal investigations. Because of the rural nature of our state, many criminals use vehicles to arrive to or leave the scene of a crime. Officers are taught early on to gather license plates of vehicles leaving while responding to crimes as there is the likelihood that the suspect will be fleeing that scene. Officers would not have that ability without the front license plate on a vehicle.

The other main area of concern involves the use of license plate readers. The Bismarck Police Department and several others around the state have been using this tool for several years. I can think of numerous examples of criminal cases that were successfully cleared through the use of license plate readers. As a vehicle equipped with this technology travels through an area the system automatically records the license plates of vehicle in that same area. There have been several occasions in which officers have been able to identify a vehicle by going back through that collected data and locating the suspect vehicle.

In conclusion I ask that you reject this bill and maintain the requirement of two license plates on all vehicles. By eliminating the requirement for a front license plate the likelihood of our citizens being a victim of criminal acts would be increased.

I appreciate your consideration and time relating to this bill.



March 2, 2023

From: Dave Draovitch
Chief of Police

To: Senator David Clemens, Chairman, and Members of the Transportation Committee

Subj: HB 1295

I come before you today to seek your opposition to HB 1295. As you know, HB 1295 makes it possible to display only one license plate on the rear of a motor vehicle. I and the vast majority of the members of the BPD oppose this bill for one simple reason, a motor vehicle with a front license plate gives us a much better chance to solve all manner of crimes.

A few years ago, we implemented patrol cars with license plate readers (LPRs) to our fleet. We currently have five in total. The cameras have about a 270-degree view that can capture license plates. This is one of the main reasons we at the BPD oppose HB 1295. It is highly unlikely the LPRs will capture the rear plate of a vehicle that has passed us from the opposite direction. That is one very important reason front license plates are crucial for us to solve crimes. We meet many more vehicles than we follow.

As important is the ability for officers to be able to see front license plates when they are responding to crimes in progress. It is very difficult for them to try and see a rear plate and still drive safely, especially in low light and bad weather conditions. Since we only have five patrol cars equipped with LPRs, we have many more patrol officers out in cars not equipped with LPRs. Their ability to see a front license plate could be crucial to us being able to solve the crime they are responding to.

The LPRs have been a gamechanger in helping us solve crime. Although LPRs help us solve crime while the officer is on patrol e.g., locating a stolen vehicle or a vehicle on a watch list etc., what makes them so useful and important is the data they collect and the ability to query that data in the back end of the system. As stated earlier, we meet many more vehicles than we follow. Eliminating the requirement for a front license plate will greatly diminish the data we collect. We have used the data collected to solve many serious crimes to include homicide. We have also been able to find very dangerous people by being able to find where their vehicle has parked over time. I'm sure there are other excellent reasons why this is important to us too.

I thank you for the time I have been allowed to provide information about this very important Bill and I thank you for considering opposing it as it is written today.

Dave Draovitch, Chief of Police

Phone: 701-223-1212 • Fax: 701-355-1861 • 700 South 9th Street • Bismarck, ND 58504-5899
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If you have any questions feel free to contact me at your convenience. I may be reached at ddraovitch@bismarcknd.gov or 701-223-1212.

Respectfully,



DAVE DRAOVITCH
Chief of Police

Dave Draovitch, Chief of Police

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**House Bill No. 1295****Senate Transportation Committee**

Fort Totten | March 2, 2023, 1:15 p.m.

Brad Schaffer, Motor Vehicle

Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. I'm Brad Schaffer, Interim Director of Motor Vehicle for the North Dakota Department of Transportation (NDDOT). I'm here to provide information on HB 1295.

House Bill 1295 would require the Motor Vehicle Division of the NDDOT to issue one plate per registered motor vehicle. Currently, two plates are issued. Each year an estimated 126,000 sets of plates are issued. All license plates are manufactured at Rough Rider Industries, a division of the North Dakota Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. Currently we are charged \$5.95 for a set of passenger plates and \$6.45 for special request plates. Issuing only one plate for each motor vehicle would reduce the cost by \$1 with no savings in shipping.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes my testimony. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

GRAND FORKS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

122 S 5TH ST, SUITE 210

GRAND FORKS, NORTH DAKOTA 58201-4632

SHERIFFS.OFFICE@GFCOUNTY.ORG

PHONE: 701-780-8280

FAX: 701-780-8307



SHERIFF ANDY SCHNEIDER

To: Transportation Committee Members
 From: Sheriff Andy Schneider
 Date: March 1, 2023
 RE: HB 1295

Dear Transportation Committee members,

My name is Andy Schneider, and I have the privilege of being the Sheriff of Grand Forks County. I am providing testimony regarding why I am opposed to HB 1295 in regard to public safety.

- Removing the requirement to have a front license plate will provide a significant disadvantage to law enforcement officers in our state when attempting to reduce criminal activity or apprehend suspected or convicted criminals.
- In our desolate state, officers utilize the front plate every single day to provide a safer community and state to live in.
- Often times victims of criminal activity are able to provide a description of a vehicle with the license plate numbers obtained off the front of the vehicle. The front plate is less likely to be obstructed and is more easily observed in most instances.
 - These instances include hit and runs, stolen vehicles, felonious criminal activity, gas theft and other thefts from residential and commercial sites, Amber alerts, kidnappings, and assault on a peace officer to name a few.
- One example of a front plate locating a federally sought criminal. A Grand Forks County deputy was responding to a theft from a firearm store and ran a front plate. That plate was eventually linked to the break in of this store and of another gun store and the subject was able to be identified and charged for multiple federal offenses.
- Removing the front plate requirement will result in a decrease of criminal offenses being solved in our state and will increase the number of criminals and criminal activity.
- There are very few models of vehicles that do not allow for a front plate mount, and it is not common to see those vehicles in North Dakota.

I appreciate your 'do not pass' vote for HB 1295 as it presents safety concerns for your families, our residents, visitors, and law enforcement officers.

I sincerely thank you for your time and consideration today. I am available at any time of day or night to further discuss this important bill with any and all of you.

Andy Schneider
 Sheriff
 Grand Forks County
 701-741-2269
 Andrew.schneider@gfcounty.org



68th Legislative Assembly
Testimony in **Opposition** of
House Bill No. 1295
Senate Transportation Committee
March 2, 2023

TESTIMONY OF

Major Tom Iverson, Chief of Operations

Good afternoon Chairman Clemens and members of the committee. My name is Tom Iverson and I serve as the chief of operations for the North Dakota Highway Patrol. I am here to provide testimony in opposition of House Bill 1295.

House Bill 1295 removes the requirement for a front license plate in North Dakota. From a law enforcement standpoint, a front license plate serves a legitimate purpose. For example, someone who witnesses a crime or is the victim of a crime often tries to obtain a license plate number or at least a partial license plate number to relay a vehicle description to law enforcement. Furthermore, law enforcement officers are continually dispatched to reckless driver calls. Given the number of white Chevy Silverado's traveling our roadways, it is nearly impossible to locate the correct vehicle without a description of the license plate.

Many types of incidents benefit from license plate descriptions including:

- Attempt to locate calls such as a missing person or suicidal subject
- Gas drive offs
- Crashes involving a vehicle that flees the scene
- Stolen vehicles
- Violent incidents such as shootings
- Road rage incidents
- Reckless driver calls
- Amber, Silver, and Blue Alerts
- Rolling domestic violence calls
- Trespassing situations
- Assaults
- Burglaries

Law enforcement officers across the state respond to these types of incidents on a daily basis and rely on license plate numbers as one method to quickly identify a suspect vehicle. Officers are frequently checking front license plates on passing vehicles during each shift.

According to the National Sheriffs' Association, motor vehicles are involved in 70% of serious crimes in the U.S., including murder, assault, robbery and drug smuggling. Additionally, without a front license plate, it is very easy for criminals to intentionally park their vehicle to make it very challenging to impossible for law enforcement officers to be able to see the rear plate.

From a highway patrol standpoint, our agency enforces registration violations as well. Everyone who operates a vehicle on a public roadway is expected to register their vehicle, but the fact is that failing to register a vehicle is a common violation. Front license plates help with enforcement.

It's understandable that someone who owns an expensive vehicle wouldn't want to drill holes into their front bumper, but there are options to attach license plates without causing any damage such as adhesive license plate brackets.

States like California are pilot testing license plate wraps which are installed and removed like graphics on our patrol vehicles. California's DOT authorizes a vendor, and interested customers pay a fee of \$120 to purchase their own front plate so there is no cost to the state. This would be similar to purchasing an antique plate in North Dakota which costs \$100 or a collector plate which costs \$160.

A front license plate may not be aesthetically pleasing, but it does serve a purpose, especially helping members of the public and law enforcement identify potential vehicles involved in a crime. It's difficult to see a rear license plate in a rear-view mirror after a vehicle passes, and it's impossible at night. Even the color, make, and model of a vehicle can be difficult to decipher at night, so a front license plate is beneficial.

This concludes my testimony. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

TESTIMONY

Senate Transportation Committee

HB 1295

Matt Bjornson

Bjornson Oil Company Inc.

Cavalier, ND

Chairman Clemens and members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in opposition to HB 1295. Our small family owned petroleum business has three retail stores in North Dakota. Drive Offs have been a major problem, one that is getting worse. We have invested over \$65000 for our three stores for advanced video surveillance systems. The capturing of front license plates has been essential for catching those who drive off without paying. Law enforcement has been helpful in finding people who choose this form of theft. Even with all our efforts, and with the help of the good people in law enforcement, our losses for drive offs last year were \$16416.79. That is a big number for a small company.

In past years, going all the way back to 2005, the legislature has rejected bills eliminating front license plates 6 times. With all due respect, I have to wonder why certain legislators want to harm small business and affect public safety for the sake of vanity. This bill is about not wanting to put front plates on sport cars.

Finally, I would like to share that the existence of front plates facilitated one of our clerks in reporting an extremely intoxicated customer who was in the store buying milk. They were personally compelled to immediately report the situation, they could see car seats in the customers vehicle. The driver was apprehended shortly thereafter.

I respectfully ask for your votes against HB 1295. Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration.

Matt Bjornson

February 28, 2023

From: Lt. Jeff Solemsaas

To: Senate Transportation Committee

Re: HB 1295

Chairman Clemens and Senators of the House Transportation Committee,

My name is Jeff Solemsaas, I'm here to voice our opposition to HB 1295 relating to the number of license plates assigned to a motor vehicle. The Bismarck Police Department is strongly against this proposal.

I have been a law enforcement officer for almost 30 years, for the last 10 I have been assigned as the Traffic Commander for the City of Bismarck Police Department. License plate provide a valuable tool to identify vehicles. By removing the front license plate the chances of identifying an owner is greatly reduced.

Our officers frequently rely on the ability to identify vehicle that are involved in a variety of activity, both criminal and traffic related. By allowing the owners of vehicles to only display one license plate will greatly diminish the ability of the officers to identify the owner of a vehicle. I have seen numerous reports in which an officer was able to locate a vehicle that was involved in a hit and run either through the use of video cameras or witness'. Often it is the front license plate that is either captured on a video system or the witness is able to see the front license plate of a vehicle that is fleeing the scene. By reducing the ability to identify vehicles involved in hit and runs the chances of successfully locating a suspect vehicle are greatly diminished.

Obviously, these scenarios also apply to criminal investigations. Because of the rural nature of our state, many criminals use vehicles to arrive to or leave the scene of a crime. Officers are taught early on to gather license plates of vehicles leaving while responding to crimes as there is the likelihood that the suspect will be fleeing that scene. Officers would not have that ability without the front license plate on a vehicle.

The other main area of concern involves the use of license plate readers. The Bismarck Police Department and several others around the state have been using this tool for several years. I can think of numerous examples of criminal cases that were successfully cleared through the use of license plate readers. As a vehicle equipped with this technology travels through an area the system automatically records the license plates of vehicle in that same area. There have been several occasions in which officers have been able to identify a vehicle by going back through that collected data and locating the suspect vehicle.

In conclusion I ask that you reject this bill and maintain the requirement of two license plates on all vehicles. By eliminating the requirement for a front license plate the likelihood of our citizens being a victim of criminal acts would be increased.

I appreciate your consideration and time relating to this bill.



POLICE

Mandan North Dakota

Jason J. Ziegler
Chief of Police
205 1st Ave NW
Mandan, ND 58554
701-667-3250

Date: March 2, 2023

To: Chair Senator D. Clemens and Senate Transportation Committee Members

From: Jason J. Ziegler Chief of Police for the City of Mandan

Reference: HB1295 Relating to number plates

I am Chief Jason J. Ziegler, the Chief of Police for the City of Mandan and the current sitting president for the Chiefs of Police Association of North Dakota. I am her today in opposition to HB1295.

I have been in law enforcement for almost 33 years and for the last 7 as the Chief of Police for the City of Mandan. I also worked for an agency in a state that had no front license plate for approximately 26 years and I can speak from experience that not having front license plate does make policing more difficult. Having the front license plate vastly assist the officers locating vehicles of interest and those that may be stolen or were used in a criminal act.

At the Mandan Police Department all of our patrol vehicles have Automated License Plate Readers (ALPR) that assist the patrol officer with locating stolen vehicles and vehicles of interest in areas that a crime was committed. Not having a front license plate would diminish the patrol officer's ability to utilize these tools to proactively solve crime and return a stolen vehicle to its owner.

In conclusion the main reason for having a front license plate is to identify the register vehicle. By having a front license plate police officers will be able to conduct a more complete investigation and have the ability to identify vehicles, regardless of the direction of travel, when involved in any investigation. I am requesting a do not pass on HB1295.

Respectfully,

Jason J. Ziegler
Chief of Police
City of Mandan



ND Petroleum Marketers Association
ND Retail Association



Testimony HB 1295

March 2, 2023 –Senate Transportation

Chairman Clemens and members of the Committee:

For the record, my name is Mike Rud. I'm the President of the North Dakota Petroleum Marketers Association. NDPMA represents nearly 600 gas retailers from across the state. On behalf of our association members, I'm here urging a **"DO NOT PASS" on HB 1295. This bill is quite simply a solution in search of a problem.**

HB 1295 is an old friend. The requirement for a plate on the front and back has been vetted numerous times. Each time it has been defeated. No one begrudges another person having a "sports" car. However, the reality is a change to one license plate will only benefit a small percentage of the population. Vanity should not be the justification for proposing a change to a law that is currently working.

Public security and safety must remain the State's top priorities. Border patrol and law enforcement are hampered by any erosion of the current requirement. Many retailers have invested large sums of money in video surveillance equipment. Convenience store owners have willingly provided much needed information, including facial recognition and license plate numbers during burglaries, Amber and Silver alerts, abductions, etc. I would bet in many cases, the two license plates now on ND vehicles have been key to quicker apprehensions. The number one incentive for store owners to install all of this

outdoor video surveillance has been license plate capture. Take away that incentive and you take away a valuable law enforcement tool.

Secondly, gas drive offs remain a problem across many parts of ND. Make no mistake, in the simplest terms drive-offs are retail fuel theft and aren't taken lightly by business and law enforcement.

ND law enforcement officials have enough issues to deal with in this day and age. It's hard to place a priority on running down a drive off when you have no license plate number to follow up on in the investigation.

NDPMA urges the state not to tread down a slippery slope. If things aren't broken, don't fix them. NDPMA asks for a **DO NOT PASS recommendation on HB 1295.**