



ADVOCATES  
FOR HIGHWAY  
& AUTO SAFETY

**URGENT: Action Needed to Support Seat Belt Upgrade Bill**

**Background on Status of North Dakota Senate Bill (SB) 2121:**

SB 2121 upgrades North Dakota’s seat belt law to primary enforcement for all occupants. Current law only requires seat belt use by adults in the front seat and is secondary enforcement. Last session, which was in 2019, a similar bill passed the Senate but failed in the House. SB 2121 passed the Senate (28 Y, 18N) on January 20, 2021. The bill is now scheduled for a hearing in the House Transportation Committee on March 18. Please see the [group letter](#) from North Dakota Public Health Association, North Dakota Emergency Nurses Association, Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety (Advocates), and KidsAndCars.org supporting SB 2121.

**We need your help to ensure 2021 is the year the seat belt upgrade crosses the finish line!**

Please contact the following Representatives and urge them to vote YES on SB 2121. If you only have time to contact a handful of Representatives, please start with the highlighted ones who have asked to hear from their constituents or who may still be considering their position.

DISTRICT	REPRESENTATIVE	Voted in 2019	Contact Information
1 – Williston	Richter	YES	701-572-1932, <a href="mailto:dwrighter@nd.gov">dwrighter@nd.gov</a>
6 – Willow City	Anderson	YES	701-366-4625 <a href="mailto:dickanderson@nd.gov">dickanderson@nd.gov</a>
6- Velva	Thomas	(New)	701-626-2777, <a href="mailto:paulthomas@nd.gov">paulthomas@nd.gov</a>
7- Bismarck	Dockter	NO	701-258-9848, <a href="mailto:jddockter@nd.gov">jddockter@nd.gov</a>
9 – Mylo	Boe	NO	701-656-3427, <a href="mailto:tboe@nd.gov">tboe@nd.gov</a>
10-Hampden	Damschen	NO	701-868-3281, <a href="mailto:cdamschen@nd.gov">cdamschen@nd.gov</a>
10-Osnabrock	Monson	NO	701-496-3394, <a href="mailto:dmonson@nd.gov">dmonson@nd.gov</a>
12-Jamestown	Satrom	NO	701-252-4058, <a href="mailto:blsatrom@nd.gov">blsatrom@nd.gov</a>
12 – Jamestown	Ostlie	(New)	701-952-8821, <a href="mailto:mostlie@nd.gov">mostlie@nd.gov</a>
13 – Fargo	K Koppelman	NO	701-492-7317, <a href="mailto:kkoppelman@nd.gov">kkoppelman@nd.gov</a>
19 – Northwood	Trottier	YES	701-238-0763, <a href="mailto:wtrottier@nd.gov">wtrottier@nd.gov</a>
23 – Finley	Devlin	NO	701-524-2303, <a href="mailto:bdevlin@nd.gov">bdevlin@nd.gov</a>
23 - Cooperstown	Vigesaa	NO	701-797-2448, <a href="mailto:dwwigesaa@nd.gov">dwwigesaa@nd.gov</a>
27 – Fargo	Stemen	(New)	507-828-7836, <a href="mailto:gstemen@nd.gov">gstemen@nd.gov</a>
28 – Edgeley	Brandenburg	NO	701-493-2915, <a href="mailto:mbrandenburg@nd.gov">mbrandenburg@nd.gov</a>
29 – Carrington	Pollert	NO	701-652-2494, <a href="mailto:cpollert@nd.gov">cpollert@nd.gov</a>
30 – Bismarck	Bosch	YES	701-226-1886, <a href="mailto:gdbosch@nd.gov">gdbosch@nd.gov</a>
30 – Bismarck	Nathe	YES	701-250-0645, <a href="mailto:mrnathe@nd.gov">mrnathe@nd.gov</a>
31 – Huff	Schmidt	NO	701-426-2102, <a href="mailto:jeschmidt@nd.gov">jeschmidt@nd.gov</a>
32 – Bismarck	Heintert	YES	701-222-1354, <a href="mailto:pdheinert@nd.gov">pdheinert@nd.gov</a>
33 – New Salem	Kreidt	NO	701-843-7074, <a href="mailto:gkreidt@nd.gov">gkreidt@nd.gov</a>
34 – Mandan	Porter	NO	701-667-2922, <a href="mailto:tkporter@nd.gov">tkporter@nd.gov</a>
35 – Bismarck	Karls	NO	701-258-6836, <a href="mailto:kkarls@nd.gov">kkarls@nd.gov</a>
37 – Dickinson	Lefor	NO	701-290-0539, <a href="mailto:mlefor@nd.gov">mlefor@nd.gov</a>
39 – Bowman	Kempenich	NO	701-523-3858, <a href="mailto:kkempenich@nd.gov">kkempenich@nd.gov</a>
41 – Fargo	Strinden	NO	701-799-9799, <a href="mailto:mstrinden@nd.gov">mstrinden@nd.gov</a>

**Talking Points:**

- Support passage of Senate Bill (SB) 2121, legislation that will upgrade North Dakota’s seat belt law to primary enforcement for all occupants.

- In 2019, 100 people were killed in motor vehicle crashes in North Dakota, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). Lack of restraint use is a major contributing factor to traffic deaths and injuries.
- Over the ten-year period of 2010 to 2019, motor vehicle crashes claimed the lives of nearly 1,300 people in North Dakota (NHTSA).
- Seat belt use rates increase from 10 to 15 percentage points when primary laws are passed, as experienced in a number of states.
- Unbelted rear seat passengers are known as “back seat bullets” because they can be thrust at high rates of speed into the driver resulting in loss of control of the vehicle and into other occupants causing fatalities and serious injuries.
- The chance of death for a belted driver seated directly in front of an unrestrained passenger in a serious head-on crash was more than double than if seated in front of a restrained passenger.
- A study conducted by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) found that when states strengthen their laws from secondary to primary enforcement, driver death rates decline by an estimated seven percent.
- Motor vehicle crashes cost North Dakota over \$700 million annually (NHTSA).
- Unbelted crash victims have medical bills that are 55 percent higher than belted victims, and society bears a majority of the cost through increased insurance premiums, taxes and health care costs (NHTSA).
- Upgrading North Dakota’s seat belt law to primary enforcement for all occupants will send a strong message to drivers and passengers that everyone needs to buckle up on every trip.

Thank you for your help. Please contact Tara Gill, [tgill@saferoads.org](mailto:tgill@saferoads.org), if you have any questions or would like additional information.