



NORTH DAKOTA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Senate Budget Hearing Committee

**Transportation Investments: Promoting Economic Growth and
Improving Safety Along ND 23**

Is investing in ND Hwy 23 a prudent and wise investment? Absolutely!!
Addressing safety issues is critical!!

North Dakota, because of its sparse population, has one of the highest miles driven per capita in our nation. This is especially true of our region when the residents must travel 70 - 100 miles one way to the four major shopping areas of Williston, Minot, Bismarck and Dickinson. Hwy 23 is our connecting route to these areas which makes Hwy 23 a very important and vital route to our region.

Agriculture is our #1 industry, but recent oil and gas development in this region is emerging, along with recreation, hunting and fishing. Each of these industries are highly dependent on Hwy 23 for moving of goods, equipment, and people.

Hwy 23 is one of 2 major highways running east and west across Northwestern North Dakota. It links us with the rest of Western North Dakota, crossing of the Missouri River at the 4-Bears Bridge. The location of the Missouri River through our area limits our option of travel to the South, creating Hwy 23 as the only option to the Southwest for travelers of our region.

Recreational sites in this region, such as Van Hook, Parshall Bay, Pouch Point, The New Town Marina, and 4-Bears Marina are all dependent on Hwy 23. We must note the population at these sites on any given week-end more than doubles Mountrail County's population of 7000. The interest for housing at these sites has increased three-fold and in recent years more and more people have purchased lots at or near these recreational areas. Transportation on Hwy 23 to these recreational sites plays a large part of this region's economy.

Let's focus on our Oil and Gas Development along Hwy 23. The development of Oil and Gas is completely dependent on trucking. One rig will drill approximately 10-12 wells in one year, and it takes approximately 1000 truck loads to set up, drill and dismantle a rig before it moves to its next site. Fracing techniques used in horizontal drilling uses 900,000 gallons to 2.3 million gallons of water. There could be 150-400 tanker trucks hauling 6000 gallons of water across our highway system to each well.

Today, we have over 60 rigs working in our region, capable of drilling 600-700 wells per year. That makes 700,000 truck loads per year and additional 200,000 plus loads of water each year. Putting us near or over one million truck loads traveling over our highway system, which includes Hwy 23. The roads of our area were not designed for that kind of heavy traffic. Our interstate highways are the only systems designed to handle this kind of traffic, not Hwy 23.

Where do these tankers get this water? The communities of New Town, Parshall, along with a few other water depots provide water. Where do they travel, right down Hwy 23!! This is not a short term situation. We now anticipate 15-20 years of drilling with over 10,000 wells in Western North Dakota.

I have provided current data reflecting traffic counts from 2006- 2009 on several major highways, Hwy 85, I-94, Hwy 2 and Hwy 23. You will see a steady increase on these roads except for I-94. Current unofficial 2010 data

shows over 6000 vehicles per day on Hwy 23, this equals the traffic on I-94. It is believed that there has been over 9000 vehicles passing through New Town east to Parshall or north to Stanley along Hwy 23.

The increased traffic has created safety concerns. Hwy 23 has no turning lanes, or shoulders along its side of the highway to stop or turn off. Highway systems are designed to move products and people safely, and Hwy 23 is a bottleneck for traffic. It's similar to pushing water through a 6 inch pipe now try and push that same amount of water through a 1 inch hose. This is reflective of the situation we have and why it is so necessary to make the investments and improvements in Hwy 23.

Last week, after several rainy days I came upon a stalled tanker truck. The truck was loaded and had pulled over to the side of the road. With no shoulder, the majority of the truck was left sitting on the highway. We could get around him but in this case, the truck driver was stalled near the base of a hill. Now, you can imagine the concern for the traffic that was attempting to go around this stalled vehicle. I was one of fifteen vehicles attempting to pass with the uncertainty of oncoming traffic. This is not a safe situation but a very common occurrence.

Five years ago, our current highway system could handle the agricultural economy of our area. This current highway system is now limiting the economic growth of our area. It needs to grow and improve to provide adequate travel routes for the increasing demands for oil development and recreation that is now facing this area and the people who live along Hwy 23.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kenton Onstad". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the typed name.

Rep. Kenton Onstad
District 4

ADT= Average Daily Traffic

Hwy	Reference Point	Year	ADT	ADT (Trucks)
2	31 / North of Williston	2009	3965	890
		2008	3630	1020
		2005	2700	490

2	51 / West of Ray	2009	2964	783
		2008	2675	669
		2007	2116	466
		2006	1874	378

2	124 / East of Berthold	2009	3330	720
		2008	2770	401
		2004	2065	202

23	3/ East Watford City	2009	2925	700
		2006	1700	230

23	43/ West of Casino	2009	2681	678
		2008	2358	549
		2007	1726	229
		2006	1598	148

23	68 / East of Hwy 8	2009	3270	615
		2008	2625	325
		2005	2300	

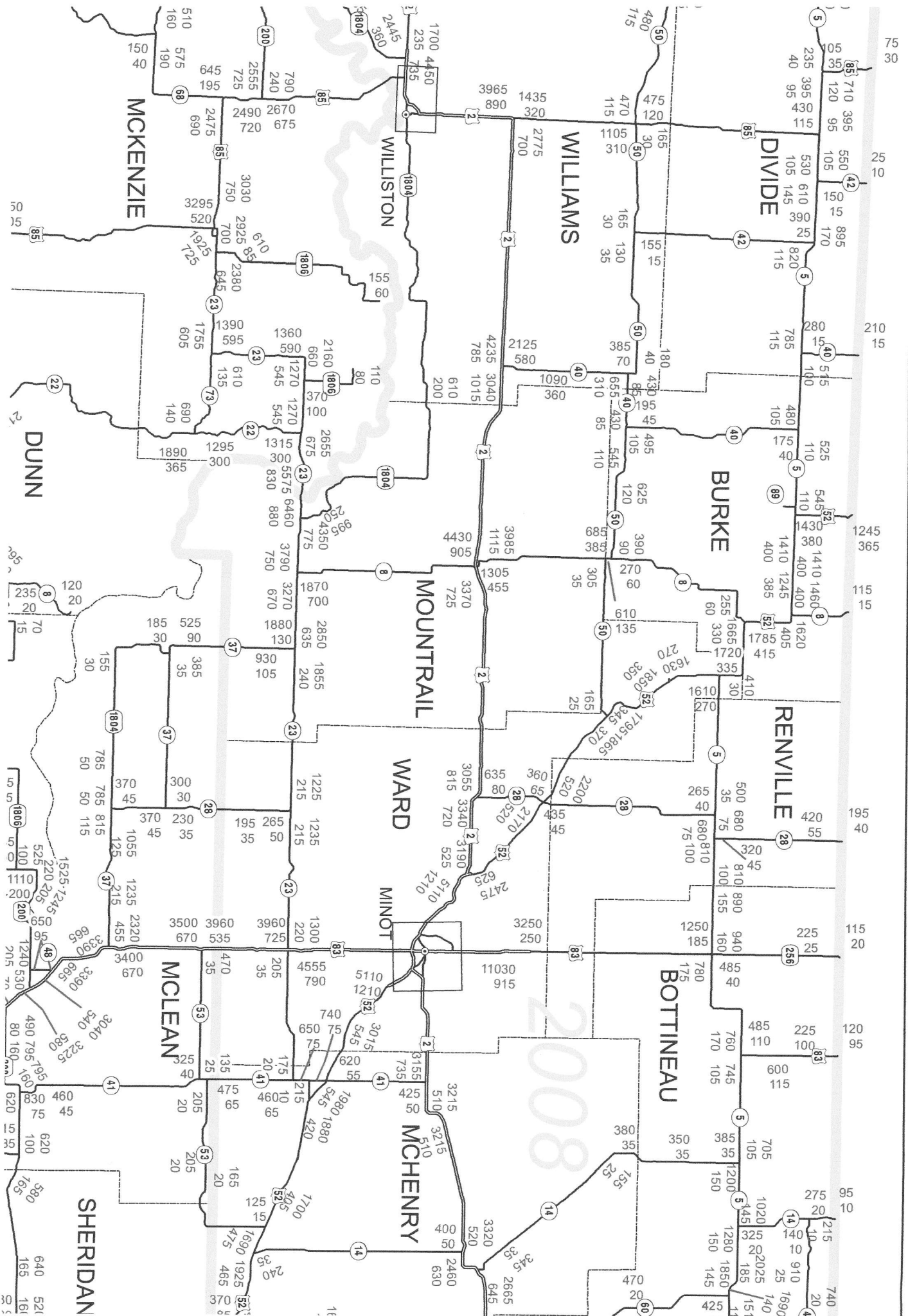
23	96 / West of 83	2009	1235	225
		2008	1220	
		2004	1000	

85	81 / North of Belfield	2009	1820	504
		2008	1810	507
		2007	1759	475
		2006	1652	398

85	137 / South of Watford City	2009	1475	400
		2006	1450	

94	82 / West of Richardton		2009	5725	1365
			2006	5200	1450

94	127 / West of New Salem		2009	6588	1439
			2008	6198	1467
			2007	6262	1462



MCKENZIE

WILLISTON

WILLIAMS

DIVIDE

BURKE

MOUNT RAIL

RENVILLE

WARD

MINOT

BOTTEAU

MCHENRY

MCLEAN

SHERIDAN

2008

75 30

25 10

210 15

1245 365

115 15

195 40

115 20

120 95

56 10

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83

14

185

50

50

50

50

28

83

14

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