

Senator Conrad

Senate Budget Committee Field Hearing

“Transportation Infrastructure’s Role in Economic Growth: US 12 and 85 ”

August 24, 2010

Lyn James, President, City Commission

City of Bowman, North Dakota

Good afternoon Senator Conrad.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak about transportation and the role it plays in our economic growth.

The City of Bowman takes pride in the fact that we serve as a business hub for southwestern North Dakota, northwestern South Dakota and southeastern Montana. Being located at the crossroads of Highways 12 and 85 has put us in a unique position. Many small communities struggle to maintain their existing businesses together with their population. Bowman has the privilege of enjoying the commerce and trade that come with the traffic that funnels through our community. Of course population growth has been a benefit as well.

Commerce is a key component in the success of our community. The intersecting highways bring many different trades to and through Bowman. Agriculture related traffic supports our grain elevator, seed buyers and sellers, chemical suppliers and water sales, fuel suppliers, farm implement dealers, truck and auto dealers, automotive parts sales, livestock auction market, farm and ranch sales, veterinarian services, and feed sales. The energy traffic supports some of the same businesses as I mentioned previously, as well as welding shops, engine repair, trucking, construction business, and tire sales. Some of the energy traffic originates from the Bowman area with the various oil related businesses located here. The tourism traffic supports our motels, restaurants, fuel and convenience store sales, as well as main street businesses. Motels, restaurants and bars also

collect hospitality and lodging taxes which assist in funding various tourism related projects and local promotions. Of course, the dollars spent in all of these areas trickle down to healthcare providers, grocery stores, banking, the retail trade on our main street, the lumber yards and contractors, and the list goes on and on. A strong economy also is a key factor in the support of our churches and civic organizations.

Highway 12 sometimes is lost in the shuffle due to the hot topic of Highway 85. Presently Highway 12 west of Bowman is the route taken to the oil field in Bowman County, carrying numerous vehicles every day. The Three Forks formation extends into eastern Bowman County, and when exploration gravitates in that direction, Highway 12 east of Bowman will bear the same burden. Not only will Bowman see more commerce due to future exploration, but Scranton and Gascoyne in eastern Bowman County will see some activity as well.

Safety is also a very important issue. Its importance parallels the economics of this transportation issue. Many members of our community and the surrounding area travel Highway 12 as well as Highway 85 to work each and every day. The enhancements that are being done today, as well as the proposed enhancements that are being researched at this time are of great importance to the safety and well being of the people who drive it.

Future funding is critical to the continued growth of Bowman County and all of western North Dakota.

Senator Conrad, I thank you and commend you for the time and attention you are giving to the issue of transportation here in western North Dakota.