



# SAID & HEARD

**BISMARCK, ND** – Testimony heard in the state capitol in Bismarck this week provides a glimpse into how the Dakota Access Pipeline protests have spurred new legislation.

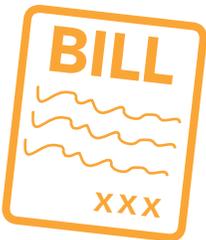


## **Representative Todd Porter, Mandan (Legislative Committee)**

“There were businesses that had to completely stop their business for an entire day. Sometimes two days, before they could resume normal activity. And then only at a cost of hiring private security and other safety measures for their employees and for their clientele. Our very own Bank of North Dakota was one of them. They’ve increased costs for security. They’ve had situations where people have chained themselves to the railings inside of the bank.”

## **The Grand Forks Herald article by Patrick Springer**

“One of a pair of bills North Dakota lawmakers have drafted in response to the ongoing protests against the Dakota Access Pipeline would help prevent lawsuits and criminal charges against pedestrians who are blocking traffic on a public road. House Bill 1203, whose prime sponsor is Rep. Keith Kempenich, R-Bowman, would eliminate a driver’s liability for damages if he or she negligently injures or kills someone who is ‘obstructing vehicular traffic on a public road, street, or highway.’ Injuring or killing a road-obstructing pedestrian would also be free from criminal penalty if the driver struck the person unintentionally. Kempenich said the bill was prompted by experiences his mother-in-law had while driving south of Mandan, where protesters have massed in opposition to the \$3.8 billion crude oil pipeline, sometimes closing roads or causing delays or other problems for passing motorists. Highways shouldn’t be used as staging areas for protests, Kempenich said. ‘They’re intentionally putting themselves in danger,’ he said, adding that accidents could result.”



## **MyNDNow story**

“The state senate passed a bill today to borrow another \$11 million dollars from the Bank of North Dakota to pay expenses related to law enforcement at the site of protests against the Dakota Access Pipeline. Senator Ray Holmberg urged his colleagues to support the funding, saying that the cost to the state is high - and rising. “Where we’re at right now is we’ll have \$25 million of loans from the Bank of North Dakota,” Holmberg said. “We know within the next month or so there will be another 10 to 15 million dollars of cost. And there is also the question of clean-up costs that will come forth.”

## **abcnews.com story by AP’s James MacPherson**

“Republican Gov. Doug Burgum, like his GOP predecessor and most in the Legislature, have been sympathetic to pipeline builders and to law enforcement and residents affected by the protests.

Burgum said in his state of the state address earlier this month that the Standing Rock Sioux tribe raised “legitimate issues” but “those have been hijacked by those with alternative agendas.” He said criminal activity will not be tolerated.

“To those North Dakotans personally affected by this ongoing dispute, we hear your concerns,” Burgum said. “Be assured that maintaining the rule of law in our state remains our priority.”

