

January 28, 2017

Wyoming State Legislature
House Transportation, Highways
and Military Affairs Committee

*sent via electronic submission
to committee*

RE: HB 202, Uninsured motorist penalties, NAMIC's written testimony IN SUPPORT of legislation

Dear Representative Eklund, Chair; and honorable members of the House Transportation, Highways and Military Affairs Committee:

Thank you for affording the National Association of Mutual Insurance Companies (NAMIC) an opportunity to submit written testimony to the House Corporations, Elections and Political Subdivisions Committee for the January 31, 2017, public hearing.

The National Association of Mutual Insurance Companies (NAMIC) is the largest property/casualty insurance trade association in the country, with more than 1,400 member companies. NAMIC supports regional and local mutual insurance companies on main streets across America and many of the country's largest national insurers. NAMIC members represent 40 percent of the total property/casualty insurance market, serve more than 170 million policyholders, and write nearly \$225 billion in annual premiums. NAMIC has 119 members who write property/casualty in the State of Wyoming, which represents 42% of the insurance marketplace.

The proposed legislation would increase the motor vehicle fine for operating a vehicle without state mandated automobile liability insurance coverage from \$250 to not less than \$500 or more than \$1500 for violation of the financial responsibility law.

NAMIC supports this reasonable and measured attempt by the state to discourage and penalize driving a motor vehicle without financial responsibility, because law abiding citizens of the state, who purchase auto insurance, end up paying the cost of uninsured motorist, which is unfair to them and detrimental to the general welfare of all citizens of the state.

The uninsured motorist problem is a significant one nationally and is regularly evaluated and discussed by the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC). According to the Insurance Research Council (IRC), nearly 13% of motorists, or about one in eight drivers, were uninsured in 2014.

As stated by the NAIC in a recent meeting on the uninsured motorist problem, "[p]aying for uninsured motorists is a problem for responsible drivers who abide by compulsory insurance

laws. The costs are passed along to the public in the form of uninsured motorist's coverage [costs]. Thus, in addition to paying for their own actions, each insured motorist also pays for a portion of the costs for others that choose to disobey the law.”

For the aforementioned reasons, NAMIC respectfully requests that the House Transportation, Highways and Military Affairs Committee **VOTE YES ON HB 202, because responsible, law abiding insurance consumers shouldn't be forced to have to pay for irresponsible motorist.**

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please feel free to contact me at 303.907.0587 or at crataj@namic.org, if you would like to discuss NAMIC's written testimony.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Christian John Rataj". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Christian John Rataj, Esq.
NAMIC – Senior Director of State Affairs
Western Region