

TESTIMONY BY JOEL FRIESZ
IN SUPPORT OF HB 1433
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2021

Chairman Klemin and House Judiciary Committee Members. Please accept this as written testimony in support of HB 1433 pertaining to bias crimes.

Through my work in the field of Restorative Justice over the past 16 years in North Dakota, I've had the opportunity to work directly with hate crimes, victims, and offenders. I support this bill because it distinguishes a bias crime from other forms of crime which is an important element to identifying and treating the root cause of this specific form of violence. There are certain forms of violence, such as bias crimes, that need to be looked at separately due to its unique nature (Domestic Violence is another example). A bias crime is targeting a person or group because of their identity and should be handled with an extra set of factors that will make the response and prevention efforts more effective. I especially appreciate the training element of this bill as training is critical in identifying and responding to a bias crime in the best way possible for all parties involved as to not worsen the impacts of the harm done. I also appreciate the reporting element of this bill as collecting and studying data on specific forms of crime is another important element in crime prevention and response.

Thank you for the opportunity to share this information with you. I am happy to answer any questions or provide additional information.

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