

Testimony for HCR 3022- Ivie Frederick, TMCHS graduate student.

While many students in North Dakota play sports, many of different races, there is one minority group that stands out and that's Native American athletes. My name is Ivie Frederick, and I am a Turtle Mountain Community High School (TMCHS) graduate. I'm writing this testimony in hopes you pass HCR 3022 bill because many Native American students including myself have experience some sort of discrimination.

My first encounter was my sophomore year in high school where I just transferred to TMCHS from St. John Public School. I was playing in a Volleyball match at Jamestown High School when a student in the student section had called me a "prairie n- word" to me. At first, I didn't understand what the racial slur was because I just transferred from an off-the reservation school where I've never even had to deal with discrimination because it was a white school. My coaches, Betty Delorme and Cindy Keplin had tried to talk to the Athletic director and when he went talked to the student section, they said I made it up. I kept asking my coaches throughout the match what it meant but they wouldn't tell me or even acknowledge what I was asking. After the match was over, my coaches tried to explain to the AD that I wasn't making it up because I don't know what the slur was. The AD never did anything, and my coaches had to explain to me that when we compete against schools, that this was going to happen, and you just have to ignore it. This frustrated me because I'll be honest, I don't look native but because of the jersey I was wearing and the team I was playing for the students felt they could say things like this to me. Many students from TMCHS endure so much nepotism while playing non-native schools and it needs to stop. We deserve to feel safe when we play other schools. Playing sports should be fun, we shouldn't dread going to compete other schools because we know what the spectators are going to say to us. It's not fair and we should be treated equally no matter what color we are, or what race we are.