

Sixty-eighth
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA
Introduced by Representative Davis

Honorable Chairman

March 1, 2023

Dosha,

My name is Ken Hall, a proud member of the Three Affiliated Tribes here in North Dakota home of the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara People. I am providing testimony for Resolution HCR#3022.

It's 2023 and we are still having these conversations of derogatory comments and gestures at High School sporting events. We have made numerous attempts in the past to have Native American representation on the North Dakota High School Activities Association Board of Directors to address some key issues like the one we are currently having. There again we need representation on the NDHSAA Board of Directors to have a voice at the table.

We have successfully passed legislation during the 67th Legislative Assembly of SB 2304 which is all schools public and non-public are to incorporate Native American History into their current curriculum. Thank you all for your outstanding support of this legislation.

This Bill is now a law in our great State. It is our first step together toward understanding us as Native Americans and who we are. Another recommendation would be to have Cultural Sensitivity Training for all staff and students and a NO Tolerance policy at all sporting events. Obviously, what is in place is not working and things need to change for the better. We continue to fight the good fight of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for all our student/athletes and the work continues. I welcome your leadership in this session to enhance and implement SB #2304 with a fiscal note attached to it for the full and effective implementation of it.

Let us work together to find solutions to this long standing issue and be innovative, creative, and take concrete actions towards something that we can all be proud of. Let's lead the Nation and let North Dakota can be the model for the rest of the country. We can do this.

In closing, we as a family experienced discrimination and racism with our daughter just a few years ago while she was in High School. The trauma these kids experience is real and without support of the school, parents, or the community these kids fall through the cracks. If we say we are all about the kids, then we all should be acting like it and start to take actions and not let it just words without action.

We need a zero tolerance against all racism and discrimination in sport and in high schools sports in North Dakota. We also need to evaluate our sport organizations and boards of directors to ensure they truly represent the people. We need to create spaces on boards for leadership that comes from the Tribal Nations, and, we need to do this now.

I ask for you to support this important resolution today. (HCR #3022)

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L. Kenneth Hall