

To whom it may concern,

My testimony is in opposition to House Bill 1332. I ask that you give this bill a Do Not Pass.

The reason is this bill affects people I care about a lot, as well as people I don't know well enough yet. This bill pretty much states it is not an ethical violation for a licensee to engage in practices or treatments that attempt to change or repair the sexual orientation or gender identity of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer individuals. This proposal basically says it's okay to conduct conversion therapy, which is a therapy for changing a person's sexual orientation, on the idea that homosexuality is a mental condition that requires therapy (a position condemned by the American Psychiatric Association as unethical).

You might wonder who I am. I'm not only a transgender man who lives in North Dakota, but I am a student at the University of North Dakota who is studying social work for my major. I am just representing myself, not my school nor for any other organization. I felt this bill would affect my future on my practice in the future.

From what I can understand this bill, it is trying to restrict how I care for future patients who identify as part of the LGBTQAI2S+ community. I feel like that goes against the National Association of Social Work code of ethics. Especially against the core values of social work which are:

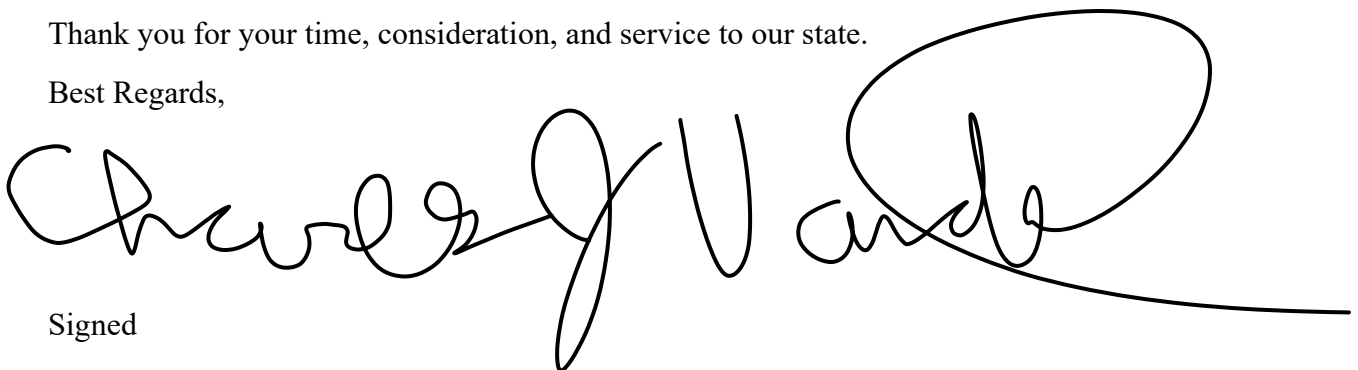
- service
- social justice
- dignity and worth of the person
- importance of human relationships
- integrity
- competence

With this bill, it affects the services social workers now and, in the future, can provide. It is telling LGBTQAI2S+ community that there is something wrong with them, and they need to fix which damages the dignity and worth of the person. I know some might argue that there are some who might want to change. Did you know that in a 2020 survey, 58% of LGBTQ youths reported that someone, typically parents, friends, relatives, or religious leaders, attempted to convince them to change their sexual orientation or gender identity. It is unknown how many adults are talked into changing their identity due to religion, family and many other types of beliefs. There are stats and data showing the damage conversion therapy has. By not passing this bill, you help lower the stats and data.

That is why I ask you once again to give Bill 1332 a Do Not Pass.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and service to our state.

Best Regards,

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Charles V. Anderson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large loop at the end.

Signed

Charles J Vondal

Forsythe, A., Pick, C., Tremblay, G., Malaviya, S., Green, A., & Sandman, K. (2022). Humanistic and Economic Burden of Conversion Therapy Among LGBTQ Youths in the United States. *JAMA pediatrics*, 176(5), 493–501. <https://doi.org/10.1001/jamapediatrics.2022.0042>