



NORTH DAKOTA

Family Alliance LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Testimony in Support of House Bill 1362

Mark Jorritsma, Executive Director
North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action
March 13, 2023

Dear Madam Chair Lee and honorable members of the Senate Human Services Committee,

My name is Mark Jorritsma and I am the Executive Director of North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action. I am testifying on behalf of our organization in support of House Bill 1362 and respectfully request that you render a “DO PASS” on this bill. We also greatly appreciate the bill sponsor incorporating our suggested amendments into the original version of the bill introduced in the House.

The idea behind this bill is that parents are the final arbiters of all aspects of their children’s lives. North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action believes that the family was instituted by God and was intended as the optimal environment to raise children. To quote Sections 2a and 2b of the bill:

a. [the] parent possesses a fundamental liberty interest to raise the parent's child without undue government interference in the care, custody, and management of the parent's child and, at all times, retains a vital interest in preventing the irretrievable destruction of family life b. It is in the best interest and welfare of a child to be raised under the care and supervision of the child's parents.

We wholeheartedly agree. It is sad that we as a society even need to specify that parents are the authority when it comes to their own children. We are not oblivious to single-parent families or relatives raising children – they are a significant portion of all U.S. families. Actually, this bill ensures that they, who are often marginalized or discounted because of their family structure, are granted the same liberties as traditional two-person families. You might also note that the bill does not exclude same-sex families. This bill does not play favorites.

We appreciate the sponsor’s inclusion of bill sections that address parents who are unfit for their responsibilities. There are limits to a parent’s rights and this is acknowledged.

As I stated, North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action supports HB 1362 and requests that the committee render a "DO PASS" on the bill. Thank you for allowing us to submit testimony on this bill and please reach out to us with any questions you may have.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Jorritsma". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mark" written in a slightly larger, more legible script than the last name "Jorritsma".

Mark Jorritsma
Executive Director