

Senate Human Services Committee
March 17th, 2025 SB 1450
Testimony in Opposition

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

I urge a "Do Not Pass" on HB 1450.

I work in healthcare and alongside organizations like Youthworks, which serve trafficked youth. I've also attended and routinely promote the work of Families Flourish North Dakota, the new name for what was Prevent Child Abuse North Dakota.

And this is one of the scariest bills I've seen this session.

The bill author suggests her proposal should not apply to emancipated minors or suspected cases of physical or sexual abuse. I will remind the committee our state does not allow emancipated minors. And that the bill as written interrupts the process in which a doctor could find or learn about abuse.

Every tool we give to further empower parents is inevitably a tool we also give to individuals who abuse youth. We make certain compromises within our society to balance the parental rights of our families, while assuring our youth are safe. Parents should expect to concede some of their authority for the greater good of protecting children everywhere.

I do not believe loving families and parents are hampered by their child speaking to a doctor privately. I do not believe that there is a crisis we are solving here that is worth more than the damage we will certainly do to youth across our state in this effort. When we think about these bills we must center the youth and consider the worse that can happen to them. As when they are in a truly loving and supportive home, this bill certainly isn't helping them. But when they're in a bad home, bills like this could mean they don't make it to the age of majority.

Please vote "Do Not Pass."

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