



HB 1391

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Chair Barta and Members of the Committee: My name is Carter Gill, and I am Vice President of Governmental Affairs for the North Dakota Student Association. I am here today in opposition of HB 1391.

The North Dakota Student Association is dedicated to ensuring that students have a voice at the table in policy that affects higher education. We consist of delegates from each of the 11 public North Dakota University System (NDUS) institutions, meeting monthly to engage students in discussions about North Dakota higher education policy. Since 1969, our mission has been to empower students, create collaboration between the student bodies of the North Dakota public universities, and to provide a student perspective on higher education policy.

In our March meeting, the NDSA passed [NDSA-28-2425](#): A Resolution in Opposition to HB 1391: Creating a New Status Related to Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Policies. I will also add that this resolution in opposition to this bill was unanimously approved by delegates from all 11 NDUS institutions. Without going into the politicized aspects of this bill, especially since the increased politicization in the last five years, the main concern of the NDSA regarding this bill is the potential health risks for students at NDUS campuses. Below is an excerpt of NDSA-28-2425:

WHEREAS, HB 1391 defines health status as “an individual's medical records or preferences relating to the right to refuse a medical procedure, treatment, injection, device, vaccine, or prophylactic”; and,

WHEREAS, incorporating health status as a protected class poses serious health risks to NDUS students, faculty, and staff due to the fact that an NDUS institution would not be able to prevent

a student who is not vaccinated for preventable communicable diseases such as meningococcal disease, MMR (measles, mumps and rubella), and hepatitis B from working in campus spaces such as dining halls and residence halls, increasing the risk of students contracting these diseases; and,

WHEREAS, should HB 1391, NDUS employers such as food services, libraries and student services cannot require that students have these immunizations to be eligible for employment or that students not come into work should they contract communicable diseases; so,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the NDSA opposes HB 1391, as it would jeopardize the general health safety of the student population as well as faculty and staff across the NDUS campuses; and,

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the NDSA suggests HB 1391 to be amended to reflect the stances of the medical community regarding definitions and recommendations for community safety.

In summary, the NDSA believes that the dangers of this bill far outweigh any potential benefits and we as an organization strongly oppose this bill. I ask that this committee gives this bill a DO NOT PASS recommendation.