

NDSU STUDENT GOVERNMENT



Good Morning my name is Clara Counts, I am the External Affairs Commissioner with NDSU Student Government. This morning I am testifying on behalf of the approximately thirteen thousand students attending NDSU, that compose nearly one third of the college students in the state.

Many thanks to the representatives and senators who introduced HB 1447, this bill has opened a new opportunity to discuss greater voting involvement amongst students across the state, and I am grateful to play a part in that.

Students at NDSU specifically, migrate from different parts of the state and from Minnesota to Fargo, and for the first time, live in a residence away from home. Many students have never lived in a different community, let alone took part in voting on community leaders. HB 1447 would give students a more concise plan of action in exercising their right to vote. Civil engagement ought to be promoted, especially among younger voters to ensure future involvement from educated, law-abiding citizens.

However, as discussed with my commission, HB 1447 possess a security threat to students, whereas student identification cards also serve as residence access cards. In addition, the average college student moves within the area multiple times throughout their college experience; every new identification card incurring a twenty-dollar fine.

It is the resolve of the Students of NDSU to seek an amendment to HB 1447, whereas students may receive a form from their university, identifying their address in the system that confirms they are a resident of the district in which they will vote. This amendment allows for expanded voting access for students and keeps them safe from any potential risks associated with essentially having their address on their keychain.

Sincerely,

Clara M. Counts

Executive Commissioner of External Affairs