

January 25th, 2021

Chairman Weisz and Committee Members,

My name is Grace Griffin. I live in Fargo, North Dakota with my fiancé Madison. I'm currently in student teaching as part of my last semester of a teaching licensure program. I am testifying in opposition of House Bill 1298 as it would prevent individuals from participating in sports teams that do not align with their assigned sex at birth. As a member of the LGBTQ+ community and from the perspective of an educator, I was stunned and appalled by the contents of House Bill 1298. I believe every student deserves the chance to participate in organized athletic events. Participation in these sports teams provide a unique opportunity for young people to establish crucial social skills, grow self-confidence and develop lifelong friendships. Every student deserves a chance to participate in a school sports team and have these significant experiences. HB 1298 not only limits students opportunities to these experiences, it discriminates against transgender youth who desire opportunities to become self-confident, develop social skills and connect with peers over a shared interest. I urge the committee to consider the negative impacts of HB 1298 and to stand in opposition of this bill in favor of the health and well-being of young people in North Dakota.

Grace Griffin
College Student in Fargo, ND