

Testimony for HB1443

My name is Gretchen Graf and I live in Grand Forks. I want to express my support for HB 1443 which will add North Dakota to the many states which are on record in opposition to bias crimes.

I serve a small church committed to justice and compassion. The banner on the front of our altar reads "Hate Has No Home Here." The banner and our shared values affirm that all persons are children of God and deserve to be treated with respect and dignity. We are enriched by difference and we have nothing to fear from diversity. We all benefit when we acknowledge our commitment to one another out loud.

It's time that North Dakota to join 45 other states in making it clear that behaviors based on bias toward anyone or any group which endanger life or property or threaten the well-being of others, including hate-filled speech or written documents, have no place among us. We need to affirm that we intend for all persons to live in safety and the rights of all persons to the full dignity of humanity will be respected.

Thank you.