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**Testimony on Senate Concurrent Resolution 4010**

I am writing in support of SCR 4010. As I watch and listen to the past debates on this matter, it is clear to me that much of the debate is over what may or may not be the end result of the ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment. Most of those prognostications are pure speculation that takes the debate far off its proper track and miss the crux of the matter.

The overarching issue at hand is whether We the People still honor deadlines, rules and the law of the land. Those supporting the ratification of the ERA today are positing an untenable position. To support and justify their position, they have no choice but to argue that deadlines, rules and laws don't matter and can and should be ignored.

We have seen disregard for rules and laws at the national level in Congress and in many other federal institutions, the most troubling of which was at the FBI, which is supposed to be the highest law enforcement agency in our nation. We saw disregard for rules and laws in Portland, in Seattle, and in many other cities where governors, mayors and local officials turned a blind eye to wanton lawlessness and destruction on the part of their own citizens. We saw disregard for rules and laws during lawless riots at our US Capitol by a fractional percentage of the hundreds of thousands of people who were invoking their Constitutional right to peacefully assemble. We see disregard for rules and laws in the court system, in state legislatures, and we see it right down to the local level.

If supporters of the ERA truly want it adopted as an amendment to our Constitution, they have two options.

- 1) Organize an effort to secure passage of a new amendment proposal from Congress to be sent to the states for ratification.
- 2) Organize an effort to invoke the rights wisely provided to the state legislatures by our Founding Fathers in Article V to propose and ratify such an amendment.

It is unfortunate that it is necessary for the North Dakota Legislature to spend time reaffirming what should already be a matter that was settled decades ago. Unfortunately, the effort to ignore rules and laws and to push tardy ratification is pervasive and deserves a response. The question you need to ask yourself is whether you still believe that, here in North Dakota, we need to respect rules and laws. You can take a stand. North Dakota can send a clear message that we don't and won't support disregard for deadlines, rules and laws by passing SCR 4010.