

DARREN S. ALMOND

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15 March 2021

State of North Dakota Senate Judiciary Hearing

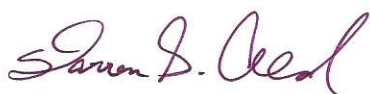
Esteemed members of the committee:

Our family recently has relocated to the Fargo area. When choosing between North Dakota and Minnesota for our residence in the area, the state leadership's conservative values were a determining factor. Thus, the underlying intent conveyed within Bill 1298 before this committee is not the heart of the issue. The overarching concern I would ask the Senate to consider is whether eliminating several youth sports that rely on national sanctioning bodies for their administration and execution is an appropriate outcome or consequence.

As a parent of a youth sports athlete who has dedicated years of training in the discipline of swimming, I have personally witnessed the value youth sports have in developing young men and women of character and discipline. It would be a shame to eliminate such valuable institutions as a consequence of trying to preserve their integrity via legislation such as currently presented in Bill 1298.

I humbly request this committee and the Senate to strongly reconsider the approach taken to address this issue in youth sports in a manner that will allow all forms of youth sports such as those sanctioned by the USA Hockey, USA Swimming, and USA wrestling to continue in our community. Disruption or elimination of these sporting disciplines for the reasons outlined in this Bill only increases the level of animosity and discord in our communities. I am hopeful a better way can be found to preserve youth sports while protecting their integrity.

Sincerely,



Darren S. Almond