

March 15, 2021

Re: Opposition to HB 1298

Good afternoon Chairman Larson and Committee Members:

We represent the executive board for Magic City Equality, an LGBTQ2S+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, Two Spirit) advocacy group based in Minot, North Dakota. We join the LGBTQ2S+ North Dakota community in our opposition to HB 1298.

Through HB 1298, transgender youth will undoubtedly suffer increased discrimination and perhaps higher risk of mental anguish. Transgender youth already have high rates of self-harm and suicide. The second annual National Survey on LGBTQ Youth Mental Health, conducted by The Trevor Project, showed that 60 percent of transgender and non-binary youth engaged in self-harm over the past year. In addition, more than half of transgender and non-binary youth surveyed reported having seriously considered attempting suicide during that period.

Preventing participation in school activities is exclusionary and sends a hateful message to our LGBTQ2S+ youth. It also sends a message to the rest of the country that the “North Dakota nice” stereotype only applies to cisgender citizens. Our elected representatives should realize this bill is unnecessary. The policy that this bill represents is harmful and unnecessary.

Magic City Equality strives to fight the battle in the war against discrimination aimed at the LGBTQ2S+ community. We will not stand down to discrimination and inequality. We highly recommend the representatives of North Dakota to not focus on winning a “sports game,” but instead focus on equality, tolerance, equity, and acceptance.

Discrimination is **not** a North Dakota principle.

Respectfully,
James C. Falcon
Christopher Dix
Shannon Krueger
Jordan Laducer

Co-executive directors, Magic City Equality

www.magiccityequality.com