My name is Crystal Cossette Knight. I'm writing today in opposition of HB 1298, not as an expert on transgender studies, not as a transgender individual, and not as a parent of a transgender youth. I am a friend of multiple transgender individuals, a parent, and a ND resident who cares deeply about all children in our state being accepted and not discriminated against. Banning transgender girls from playing on the team they identify with is telling transgender students loud and clear that they aren't welcome living as they are. The argument for supporting HB 1298 is that it will protect biologically born girls from having to compete against someone who is stronger than them so that competitions are fair. I ask you this: If there is a girl who is much larger and stronger than the other girls, even stronger than most of the boys in sports, would that girl still be allowed to participate? If so, that seems like it would also be unfair to the majority of the girls. If transgender girls are not allowed to participate in the name of fairness, then where to we draw the line in what is fair or unfair? In addition, do we want to start policing girls and making them verify their gender? If a girl is new to a school, therefore no one knows her well, and excelling at sports, will she need to be questioned and somehow prove she is biologically a girl in order to keep competing? That makes me feel like HB 1298 is not protecting our girls, but instead opening the door to having their gender questioned.

I ask you a second question: have any of you talked to any transgender people about this bill? If you are going to possible pass something that greatly affects a specific group, then you should really sit down and have a conversation with that group. If you were to sit down and speak with transgender youths, you would learn that many just want to be accepted. Students who are openly transgender are incredibly brave for being honest about who they are. They should be applauded and accepted. If only we could all be so brave.