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April 1, 2021  
Oppose House Bill 1323  
Chairman Randy A. Burckhard  
Senate Political Subdivisions Committee

Dear Chairman Burckhard and Members of the Senate Political Subdivisions Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide you this letter to inform you about AT&T's opposition to HB 1323.

AT&T complies with the CDC's COVID-19 guidelines to protect the health and safety of our employees, customers and the general public. Keeping everyone safe during this pandemic is our top priority. Accordingly, AT&T has taken steps to safely operate our business, retail locations and offices. In addition to maintaining social distance, hand washing hygiene and routine sanitizing of surfaces, AT&T has also instituted face covering requirements that must be followed in the workplace or while performing work on behalf of AT&T. It is our corporate policy that all employees, non-payroll workers and vendors must wear a face covering.

As drafted, HB 1323, and more specifically subsection 2 of the bill, would override AT&T's corporate policies and unnecessarily interfere with AT&T's ability to manage its employees and customer interactions during a public health crisis. Currently, if an AT&T employee working in North Dakota has an underlying health condition or a religious objection to wearing a face covering, we have internal processes they can use to seek an exemption and we can make a determination on appropriate job accommodations for those employees. However, legislation, like HB 1323, that allows employees to unilaterally make the determination of whether they are going to wear a face covering in the workplace would effectively nullify our policies and processes and put all of our employees, their families and our customers at risk.

AT&T's face covering policies are intended to protect everyone – our employees, our customers and the communities in North Dakota. We want everyone to be confident that AT&T will have their health and safety as a priority if they come into our stores or if one of our hardworking employees comes to their place of business. That's the very least we can do as a responsible and caring employer and corporate citizen.

Sincerely,

Cheryl Riley  
President, AT&T External Affairs  
Northern Plains States