

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee— thank you for the opportunity to speak here today. My name is Cassandra Schmidt — I’m a born and raised North Dakotan.

I’m not here to list covid facts and figures (though I have many) or to make a case against masks — I’m here as a mother of three . . . and to kindly ask that you allow me my job back . . . you see — it’s my job to protect my health and the health of my children . . . it’s your job to protect my right to do so in the methods I see fit.

Respectfully Senators — I believe this issue needs to get back to common sense. I completely understand the intentions of the people in this room are to protect the citizens of North Dakota . . . and this has gotten complicated — in my opinion — because everyone is trying to do what’s right — but— once again — with respect — your duty is not to protect our health — it’s to protect our rights so that we may protect ourselves. Our rights have been violated by these mandates.

I care deeply about my family, myself, and my community. Throughout this pandemic we’ve heard a lot about that . . . specifically, we’ve been told that caring about others — caring for your neighbor — means wearing a mask. Leaving one to assume that if you do not mask up — you must be uncaring. It’s become something used to judge your character — instead of just something used to supposedly protect your health. It’s a very polarized issue that many don’t like to talk about — for fear of offending others or being viewed as a selfish individual. So most mask up whether they agree with it or not — to keep from being viewed in this manner and to save a fight. It’s really sad that it’s gotten to this point, because freedom of choice in your medical care are not selfish.

I’d like to show you one example of the face covering that would be allowed for schools or daycares —

This looks like many of the childrens masks I see all over — they were cheap — easily accessed — and they may make it easier to talk your child into wearing them . . . these state right on the back —

This mask is not a medical device — or personal protective equipment offering protection from covid 19 or any other airborne particles . . . but aren’t we using it as such? These are just for show — but they would be acceptable for entry into any school or daycare . . . it’s they’re all for show — they’re all for nothing.

I’m here today, not as a selfish individual — not as an anti-masker — I’m neither of those things. I’m here as a well informed — well researched mother and caregiver — asking you to allow me to make the best decisions for myself and my family. I’m asking that you allow me — and everyone else to assess our own risk tolerance — to decide what we as individuals — are comfortable with for ourselves — and for our children

these masks are being used as medical devices— and we must not allow discrimination based on medical decisions in this State.

. I strongly support house bill 1323 and I’m here to kindly ask that you do the same and I’m open to any questions you may have.