

Representatives: Dyk, Hoverson, Prichard, Rios, Timmons

Senator: Beard

I am here in opposition to House Bill #1526. What this bill stands for is the refusal to acknowledge the fact that our ancestors had done some very undeniable acts of hate, suppression and blatant discrimination.

School is where our kids, the future leaders and care takers, learn not only from books but also by the actions and behaviors the adults they come in contact with as well as others that shape their school environment such as the teachers, principals, superintendents, counselors and schoolboard. What kind of message do you think HB #1526 is sending our kids, the ones who will later be taking care of your towns and state?

This bill tells kids that what happened to a group of people that live in this country and more importantly, this state, didn't happen or isn't worth discussing in History or Civics class. I ask you how do you think that makes the kids who are of a different skin color than myself or you before me? Imagine how a young student feels when he or she learns that what happened to their ancestors is not important enough to learn about in school but the happenings and accomplishments of the white population in his or her nation let alone state is worth having textbooks and class curriculum dedicated to learning what good deeds the whites did way back when settling this county to the present.

History is fact and no one can erase what happened in the past. At best what we all can do as a society is learn from the past and demand that we do better. It's a fact that slavery happened, that Native Americans were killed, rounded up and moved against their will to reservations and Asians were forced to go to internment camps during World War II. It also is a fact that the later two happened here in North Dakota. That is part of North Dakota history. So tell me, why do we not teach the complete truth vs the white washed version of US and North Dakota history? The answer is simple, it's to save face of Caucasian people and a way to avoid the very uncomfortable and ugly truth that the people who settled here before us had a side of them that discounted human life because of prejudice.

This bill encourages prejudice ideas and mindset. We should know from history that hate and bigotry is society downfall. Look what the outcome for Hitler was and for those who supported and wore the white robes of the KKK. People who live in fear and bigotry want to overlook the awful actions that were done by whites.

We owe it to the students of North Dakota to educate them on ALL the historical facts and not let pride or prejudice interfere with educating our youth. North Dakota students have the right to learn about the good and bad done by this nations forefathers as well as the people who settled this state. Sugar coating history helping anyone but it does hurt people.

Why wouldn't this state want to teach our youth what wrongs were done to people and tell our kids that this isn't tolerable any more. Our schools are filled with students of all ethnics and races. Why wouldn't we teach tolerance and acceptance by talking about the atrocities done in our past? That is

the best way to teach our youth is by having them look at the peer next to them and imagine that person having been enslaved, beaten or forced to march for days to a land that was unfamiliar to them at the whim of a person such as him or herself. Isn't that how we learn humanity? To think of others and the hardships and struggles others endured? Empathy can be taught in our schools but only if we talk about the ugliness in life.

I do not see critical race theory as a threat to anyone in North Dakota or the USA. What it can do is help the progression of fear and hate. Our youth will have their eyes and hearts opened. Wouldn't you want the future leaders of North Dakota or of this state to have humanity in their hearts and the knowledge of how to act towards others who don't look like them? To understand why using certain words or phrases is painful and that stereotypes are judgmental and wrong.

I taught my kids that no one person is better than they are and vice versa. That no one religion is better than the other and to respect others even if they are different from themselves. That is what critical race theory helps to teach. That we all are humans and deserve respect and treated fairly as the others no matter the color of skin.

Mia DeAngelo said once you know better you do better. Let's teach our kids so they do better. Keeping our kids ignorant to the full truth of what happened in our country and state's history only sets up our youth to fail one another.

Let's take the first steps on creating a diverse and well-rounded youth of North Dakota. Teach our kids the complete truth of what happened to people here in North Dakota and in other states. Don't allow our kids to be educated by ostriches whose heads are buried in the sand. Just because a topic isn't discussed in school that doesn't mean it didn't happen. Teach the complete History facts in school not the half-truths.

Thank you,

Kristie Miller
Resident of North Dakota