

HB1531

I am submitting this testimony in opposition to HB1531 as a private citizen. I am not speaking for or acting for any public institution in North Dakota. My Name is Tammy Katuin, I am a resident of Valley City, North Dakota and an Assistant Professor at Valley City State University.

As of the 2020 US census North Dakota's population is 83.7 % white. The cultural diversity in Valley City, ND mainly comes from students at Valley City State University (VCSU) who choose to come here from other states. Most of these students choose to come here to play collegiate sports while also getting an affordable education. Approximately one-third of the student population at VCSU are athletes and many of them make up our diversity. This diversity brings enrichment to our community, university and out state.

As competition grows in higher education, students have many more options to choose from. The cultural diversity tuition waiver often is a deciding factor to choose VCSU over universities, as it reduces their overall cost of their education. Diversity waivers are only used toward tuition, not living expenses, books or other fees associated with being a student. There are eligibility requirements and guidelines that must be met to be awarded a cultural diversity waiver. Those requirements can be found at this link <https://onestop.vcsu.edu/support/solutions/articles/10000072692-v820-02-valley-city-state-university-cultural-diversity-tuition-waiver-policy>

If HB1531 were to pass, the classes that I teach, and enrollment overall, would be greatly impacted. I teach courses in the department of business. At a time when we are working hard to not only maintain enrollment, but also working to increase enrollment, this bill would be devastating to not only the classes that I teach, but to the university and the community by losing these students to other universities outside of North Dakota.

These students often work part-time jobs in our community to help support themselves and afford the cost of their education. Mostly, they are working in service jobs that our local small businesses are struggling to fill. They depend on these students to fill the jobs that all businesses across our state are struggling to fill. Losing this component of our student population would be very detrimental to our local economy and to our small businesses.

Many of these students that come here from other states to play sports, and get an education stay here after graduation. I personally know many of the graduates from my classes are still here working in Valley City, Fargo, Bismarck, and other towns across our state, contributing to their communities and to the economy of these communities and our state.

I ask you, to please support the recruiting, enrollment, and retention efforts of Valley City State University, the enrichment of the community of Valley City and its economy, and the state of North Dakota by casting a Do Not Pass vote on HB1531.

- What waivers and scholarships will be impacted?
- Who will be impacted on your campus?
- What academic programs might be affected?