

Dear Chair Weisz and members of the House Human Services Committee,

My testimony is in opposition to House Bill 1249. I ask that you give this bill a DO NOT PASS.

First and foremost, it is transphobic and ignorant. The basis of this bill is to target transgender girls and women from participating in and accessing basic athletic opportunities in the state. Statistically, transgender women do not have advantage in outplaying their cisgender counterparts. Please consult the data worldwide.

Secondly, consider the harm that this will cause school districts, to be open to lawsuits and attacks. Consider the state that public school districts are already in since the COVID-19 pandemic. Morale is already suffering, resources are suffering, and we already are seeing a decline in interest from working in and supporting public education in North Dakota. Do we want to further disincentivize coaches from coaching by bringing this divisive bill into law? The reality is, we do not have a problem with transgender youth participating in sports in North Dakota. We simply have members of the public and some legislators who would seek to drive transgender youth further out of opportunities for engagement in our communities. However, this bill does not just affect transgender youth, it also creates fear, stress, and more potential for legal ramifications among our public servants who work in school districts and government agencies. Half of this bill is simply outlying who has a right to sue whom over a problem that really doesn't exist in our state.

For these reasons and the many others listed in the majority of testimonies opposing HB 1249, I ask you for a DO NOT PASS.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Naomi Tabassum, LPCC