

North Dakota

Travel Alliance Partnership

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MEMBERS

Basin Electric
Power Cooperative

Bismarck Airport

Bismarck-Mandan CVB

Bottineau Area Chamber of
Commerce

Bry's Guide Service

Destination Marketing
Association of North Dakota

Devils Lake CVB

Dickinson CVB

Eastbay Campground

Fargo Air Museum

Fargo-Moorhead CVB

Friends of Lake Sakakawea

Greater Grand Forks CVB

Hampton Inn & Suites Minot
Airport

International Peace Garden

Jamestown Tourism

Leistikow Park Campground

McKenzie County Tourism

Minot Convention & Visitors
Bureau

Missouri Valley Heritage Alliance/
Fort Abraham Lincoln
Foundation

Municipal Airport Authority
of the City of Fargo

National Hospitality Services

Newman Outdoor Advertising

North Dakota Association of
Rural Electric Cooperatives

North Dakota State Fair

North Dakota Tourism Division
(ex-officio)

Odney

RMI

Roosevelt Park Zoo

State Historical Society of
North Dakota Foundation

Staybridge Suites

Theodore Roosevelt Medora
Foundation

Valley City Tourism

Williston CVB

Testimony of James Pursley Executive Director, ND Travel Alliance Partnership In Opposition to HB 1249 January 24, 2023

Chairman Weisz and members of the House Human Services Committee, my name is James Pursley and I am the executive director of the ND Travel Alliance Partnership. On behalf of TAP, I am testifying in opposition to HB 1249, particularly Section 2, which would forbid the use of publicly funded facilities for athletic events that do not restrict participation of transgender athletes under the age of 18 or those enrolled in high school.

Under HB 1249, organizations that allow transgender athletes to compete based on their gender identity would be barred from hosting tournaments and other activities in venues like the Fargodome or the Bismarck Event Center.

This bill would require competitors in North Dakota to participate as males or females based strictly on the "biological state of being female or male, based on an individual's nonambiguous sex organs, chromosomes, and endogenous hormone profile at birth."

While TAP understands the purpose of this bill is to ensure competitive balance and equitable opportunities for all, it is our belief that this action would have unintended negative impacts on our state and its athletes. For instance, would high school wrestlers or swimmers who also are members of national sanctioning bodies be allowed to train in publicly funded facilities?

We believe competitive balance should be left to sanctioning bodies with expertise in such matters. HB 1249 would harm North Dakotans and the cities that have devoted years and invested thousands of dollars making our state the preferred destination for organizations like USA Wrestling, USA Swimming and the NCAA.

In Fargo alone, USA Wrestling results in \$7.7 million in direct visitor spending. A single USA Swimming event results in \$250,000 to \$400,000 in direct visitor spending. The potential economic harm that may be caused by Section 2 of HB 1249 outweighs the benefit. TAP asks the House Human Resources committee to consider a do not pass for HB 1249.

Thank you.