

# HB #1249

68<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session

Senators: Boehm, Estenson, Larson, Myrdal, and Paulson

Representatives: Koppelman, Cory, Kasper, Louser, Meier, Novak, VanWinkle

I am writing in opposition to HB #1249. I am a parent of a transgender person and I believe my voice should be heard.

Many of you if not all of you have no first-hand experience interacting with a transgender person or a parent of a transgender person. Your lack of knowledge and callousness toward the transgender community shows in this bill and other bills that are all designed to erase the transgender community in North Dakota. Where knowledge and compassion should be used, your using fear and false narrative which social media and fake news channels such as FOX News continues to spew.

Raising a transgender child in North Dakota, I have much more insight than a lot of people in North Dakota other than other transgender parents and the medical professionals that treat and help them. I know first-hand the struggles that the transgender child faces every day.

First, let me say this loud and clear, transgender kids are born this way. Transgender is not a choice, not a phase or fad. Being transgender is absolutely not a way to gain an edge over girls in sports. That is one of many false statements that the group who choose to hate transgender people like to state.

My child never played sports. My child never wanted to play sports. However, if my child wanted to play sports, why should she be kept out of the sport of her choice? My child looks just like any other girl her age. Her body isn't that of a male, her mannerisms and characteristics are all of female her age.

Keeping kids from playing sports with their peers is cruel and uncalled for. There is no reason to fear a transgender child playing any sports, using a locker room or bathroom with the same sex they identify as. Transgender kids just want to belong and be a part of their schools activities. These fears and concerns are all unfounded. There has been no incidents in the State of North Dakota in which a transgender person has assaulted or accosted a CIS peer. There have been instances where the CIS peer has been the aggressor and has done criminal acts on school grounds.

To judge a person whom you don't know or have any contact with because of a medical condition, that is not only cruel but it is plainly being a bully. Transgender athletes DO NOT dominate sports that they participate in. That also is another false story spread by those whose agenda is to rage war against the transgender community.

Transgender kids shouldn't be ostracized because of the ignorance of adults who say they are acting in the best interest of girls because the transgender person is a girl. Her brain, under MRI imaging, is the same brain as her female peers. Doctors know this, parents know this, and the transgender person knows this, but the legislative body here clearly does not know this.

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Keeping transgender kids from playing sports with their CIS peers is bigotry and unfair. The transgender person didn't ask to be born this way. The transgender person contributing to a team sport just like any other student in their school.

What are you teaching the CIS students in the schools by even drafting a bill like this? You are teaching students that they can discriminate against someone who is different from them. You are NOT teaching tolerance, acceptance and empathy. You're encouraging the CIS students to look at a classmate as less than. Is that how you want our children in North Dakota to see others? Would you allow this to happen to children who have Downs Syndrome? That is something a person is born with. Would you think it is ok for the CIS peers to bully and pick on the person with Downs Syndrome? There's no difference, the Downs Syndrome person is different than the CIS students. No that wouldn't be tolerated but it's open season on transgender students at school and here at the Capitol.

Schools are supposed to be a place where knowledge and tolerance is fostered. This bill allows schools to tell their transgender students they must ignore how they feel and see themselves. This bill neglects to see how this harms the self esteem and mental health of the transgender student. No one likes to be ignored let alone told to be something they aren't. Would you all want to go through life as the opposite gender just because you being who you are makes them uncomfortable? Would you willingly wear clothing and make yourself up as the opposite gender just to make me happy? No, you wouldn't do it so then why impose this on our youth?

Suicide is so high in our schools and the suicide rate is twice the rate of those who are CIS. This is unacceptable and instead of making these transgender kids feel worse and all alone, this bill just adds to the suffering of transgender kids.

Where is the compassion and acceptance that those of you who say you are Christian? This bill is anything but what Christ taught. Our Lord and Savior would not go out of His way to make the life of an innocent person worse.

This issue has been addressed two years ago with HB #1298. The State already has a guideline on transgender students who play sports. This bill is coming around again to try to keep the transgender students from playing sports. In those two years since HB #1298, has any incidents that arose from a transgender athlete has dominated a high school sport? No.

I encourage you to meet a parent of a transgender person. I know that parents of transgender kids want to be heard and would gladly sit down and talk with you, enlighten you as to what their family has gone through and what this bill would do to the student.

I ask you to vote Do Not Pass on HB #1249

Kristie Miller  
Parent of transgender