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

As a lifelong resident of Minot, I am writing today in opposition to House Bill 1297. Birth certificates are undeniably one of the most important documents U.S. citizens possess, and are required in applications for schooling, housing, driving, and many other processes. There is absolutely no benefit that comes of not allowing individuals to change their birth certificate to correctly show their identified gender, and plenty of data showing the damage that can come from such oppressive and hateful legislation. Transgender individuals, and youth especially, experience much higher rates of depression, anxiety, self-harm, and suicidality. Legislation such as this certainly contributes to those increased rates, for no good reason. I ask that you give this bill a Do Not Pass.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Mary Elizabeth Gamas