

January 21, 2023

Chairman Weisz and members of the House Human Services Committee:

I am writing you to encourage you to oppose House Bill 1522.

This bill essentially says that certain students don't deserve to be treated with compassion. Do the sponsors of this bill have no idea the number of suicides the transgender community suffer from? I can only assume they don't, so will share just a small portion of the peer-reviewed research:

- A 2020 peer-reviewed study by The Trevor Project's researchers, published in the *Journal of Adolescent Health*, found that transgender and nonbinary youth were 2 to 2.5 times as likely to experience depressive symptoms, seriously consider suicide, and attempt suicide compared to their cisgender LGBTQ peers.
- Research from Amsterdam which studied 45-years' worth of transgender suicide risk found that between 2013 and 2017, the suicide risk in Dutch referred transgender people (40 per 100 000 person years) showed to be three to four times higher than the general Dutch population (11 per 100 000 person years)
- Results from a study published in *Family Process* in 2020 supported the hypothesis that perceived relational support would reduce participants' suicide risk indirectly by first increasing their emotional stability. More specifically, our results showed that participants with higher levels of perceived relational support experienced increased emotional stability, which then led to lower levels of suicide risk for the participants.
- Data from a March 2022 issue of the *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* indicate that 82% of transgender individuals have considered killing themselves and 40% have attempted suicide, with suicidality highest among transgender youth.

HB 1522 will make these numbers increase in our state; it is disgusting, immoral, unethical, and cruel. This bill does not represent the North Dakota I know and love and I hope you will agree and issue a "do not pass" for HB 1522.

If you support this bill, I fear that you'll next be recommending the removal of accommodations for neurodiverse students and those with behavioral issues. If your ultimate goal is truly to support a child's life and access to learning, why would you support the removal of accommodations that allow this?

Sincerely,

Janet B. Anderson

Burlington, ND