



March 1, 2023

Re: SB 2302

Dear Members of the House Human Services Committee,

As the leading human rights organization for all individuals with Down syndrome, the National Down Syndrome Society (NDSS) supports the passage of SB 2302, which will promote health equity throughout the organ transplant system for people with disabilities.

NDSS also strongly encourages adding an enforcement and expedited review section to SB 2302. An enforcement section will guarantee that an individual who feels they are being discriminated against has a legal course of action to correct the situation. An expedited review section would direct a court to give priority to those affected on the docket and an expedited review. Organ transplantation is a very time sensitive process, and this wording is necessary to ensure individuals receive the care they need.

Despite existing civil rights protections, individuals with Down syndrome and other disabilities continue to face both willful and unintended discrimination in organ transplantation, limiting their access to health care when they need it most. At the same time, healthcare providers need clarity and guidance about how to account for and accommodate disability in their practice.

There are currently laws against organ transplant discrimination in 36 states. It is time for the state of North Dakota to follow suit.

NDSS envisions a world in which all people with Down syndrome could enhance their quality of life, realize their life aspirations, and become valued members of welcoming communities. We hope that the North Dakota State Legislature shares our commitment to eliminating discrimination based on disability. Thank you for your leadership on this important piece of legislation.

Sincerely,

Nick Leto
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Manager of State Government Relations
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