

Hello, my name is Katrina Graczyk, and I am here to testify on the side of making curling North Dakota's official state sport. Why does this matter? Assigning any state a state sport is nothing but a novelty. It doesn't matter. I was told a few times that a few elementary aged kids proposed this bill. Why do they care about it enough to bring this up or take it this far? First, it shows that curling has a future in this state. Second, was something I learned for myself when I showed up for a league. Lately the winter days in North Dakota have been especially snowy and chilling. It's not ideal to subject yourself to the chill of another room for the sake of a sport about moving rocks, but to my surprise inside warmed my spirits. The atmosphere was an excellent demonstration of the North Dakota kindness us outsiders so often hear about. One man I spoke to brought up the comradery about the sport and how it and only it was its essence. It's not as much about the sport as it is the people

If we're choosing a state sport then it should be one that complements North Dakota and its culture. So how does curling complement North Dakota? It's so easy to feel lonely, especially in the winter time. I've talked to many residents, newcomers, or have even heard stories of immigrants who have reported isolation in there stay here.

Compared to the often desolate loneliness the North Dakota winter can bring, curling provides an oasis of joy and excitement.

Coming from California to North Dakota was a shocking experience. San Diego has around triple the population of North Dakota, yet it's almost more difficult to find a sense of community with the people around you.

Curling exemplifies what matters. It doesn't matter where you are or what you're doing as long as you care about who you're with. I sincerely doubt many people outside of the passionate

group I met last night care about curling in the same way they do, but the essence of what curling is, is what keeps people living here.

I can't blame these kids for their passion. I'm thoroughly surprised and impressed, but after last night, I can't blame them one bit. In fact, it makes me evermore grateful for being able to move here and experience warmth and compassion in a state so vast and frigid.