



**Senate Education
SB 2351
Testimony Kirsten Dvorak
January 31st, 2023**

Senator Elkin and committee members. I am Kirsten Dvorak, Executive Director of The Arc of North Dakota; we have six chapters throughout the state of North Dakota that advocate on behalf of individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (IDD) for full inclusion in their community of choice.

I am here today to speak out against the discriminatory practice of collecting data on students with disabilities when clearing a classroom and the language stated in SB 2351.

We ask for a Do Not Pass on SB 2351

I am concerned about how this practice can impact the educational experiences and outcomes of students with disabilities. These students are often singled out and subjected to heightened scrutiny and monitoring, leading to increased anxiety, stigma, and a sense of being mistreated.

Furthermore, this practice perpetuates harmful stereotypes about students with disabilities and sends a message that they are not valued or trusted members of the school community. This can have a profound and lasting impact on their self-esteem and sense of belonging and undermine their academic and personal growth. It also perpetuates the notion that students with disabilities are inherently problematic and can lead to increased stigmatization and discrimination.

I believe that data collection should be consistent and equitable for all students, regardless of their abilities. Students with disabilities should not be subject to differential treatment or unequal expectations, and their experiences and perspectives should be valued and respected.

We also ask that a seclusion and restraint policy should always be guided by clear policies and procedures to ensure the safety and well-being of students. The North Dakota School Board Association policy is a good starting point, as it provides guidance on when and how these practices should be used and what steps should be taken to minimize their use.

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