Testimony in opposition of HB 1297

Relating to correction or amendment of birth records.

Senate Human Services Committee March 20, 2023

Senator Lee and committee members. My name is Stephen McDonough. I am providing testimony in opposition to HB 1297.

I am a board certified pediatrician who worked in North Dakota for forty years, from 1980 to 2020. I worked at the NDDoH from 1985 to 2000 and served at times as the State Epidemiologist, AIDS/Project Director, Director of Maternal and Child Health and Chief Medical Officer. As a pediatrician, I provided primary care to LGBTQ adolescents and treated them with dignity and respect.

If a person wants to change the gender on their birth certificate due to a change in gender identity, they should be allowed to do so. It is really none of the state of North Dakota's business to interfere with this.

I worked with vital records extensively from 1985 to 2000 when I worked at the NDDoH. I have also requested data from vital records in the past two years on COVID issues. Allowing people to change the gender identify on their birth certificate will NOT significantly change vital records data.

We have a Legislature considering around 20 anti-transgender bills, all based on lies and misinformation. These terrible bills have given our state the reputation of being anti-science and one of intolerance and hate. Nearly 70 religious leaders and over 200 medical providers have recently published letters to the editor opposing these hateful bills.

The North Dakota Legislature should not be bullying transgender individuals. HB 1297 needs to be defeated.

Stephen McDonough MD