HB #1297 3/19/23

68th Legislative Session

Senators: Boehm, Clemens, Myrdal

Representatives: Kasper, Boehm, Koppelman, Prichard, Rohr, D. Ruby, M. Ruby, Steiner, VanWinkle

I ask you how many transgender people have you talked to? How many parents of a transgender person have you sat down with and discussed the difficulties their child faces living in North Dakota? Odds are none of you have done either so let me introduce myself; I am a citizen, born and raised in North Dakota. I am also a parent of a transgender person.

I know firsthand how harmful this bill is and what devastation this will do to the innocent transgender youth of North Dakota. I am also someone who is in opposition to this invasive and insensitive bill.

My child was born transgender. In utero, my daughters brain developed as female after her body formed as a male. My child isn't to be blamed for being transgender and I didn't do anything to cause my child to become transgender. I have sat down and asked hard questions to the specialists who treat transgender people. I have taken my daughter to Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN. A team of specialists explained to us the tests they would perform and later told us the results.

Your bill states science, the use of DNA as a way to permanently hinder transgender people from changing their birth certificate but you also refuse to look at the complete science makeup of transgender people. Your bill is just another weapon to use against transgender people.

The authors of this bill are only pulling certain biological facts to make their case but the authors of this bill are intentionally avoiding the other biological fact which means these individuals are not looking at the complete science and are cherry picking the facts to help make their case. Thee authors of this bill are acting in an unethical fashion and are not giving the citizens of North Dakota a true and accurate picture of transgender people.

Transgender isn't a choice; it isn't a fad and it isn't a way to cause any harm to Cis-gender females. That is all hype and lies spun to make the case for those who find transgender people as a threat. There is no threat that transgender people pose to anyone. I should know, I lived with a transgender person. I sat in doctors' offices and discussed treatment. How many have you done that? I sat in counseling for many years discussing transgender issues, how many of you have done that?

I also know that making the birth certificate an item that can't be changed harms transgender people and serves no other purpose but to out transgender people and humiliate transgender people. This bill is cruel and doesn't help or protect anyone but HB #1297 does make the fact that the transgender person isn't a desired vital record stat and in fact makes the true vital statistics of ND inaccurate.

A person isn't defined by their blood type, their flesh and bone solely. My child looks in a mirror and sees a female. Her mind is female and having a body that isn't in synch with the brain is difficult. Imagine looking in the mirror and seeing a reflection and yet your outward appearance doesn't match the way you feel inside.

We all are born with an innate sense of self. Most of us are lucky enough to look in the mirror and see a reflection and feel complete and whole. Transgender people just want to feel what we feel; complete and whole. It's that simple.

Where is this fear and hate coming from? As an adult I find it hard to understand why adults would systematically target the youth in this state. HB #1297 goes as far as try to drive them out of state or to the point where they would feel such despair that there would be no other way to go become complete so they commit suicide. Why go so far as to make their vita records something they can't alter, later?

Is that the direction you envision for North Dakota? To be a state that only caters to one sect of people and if you're not of that select group then you're driven out? What possesses an adult to go and create such a discriminatory bill? What next, a bill against those who are taller than what you imagine an adult should be? How can you punish someone for something they had no control over?

This bill lacks compassion, understanding and empathy for transgender people. This bill doesn't have the best intentions for the State of North Dakota, but it is constructed with malice intent.

Who suffers if the transgender person has a birth certificate that is changed?

The changing of the birth certificate affects only the transgender person. It hurts no one if the birth certificate is changeable. You're operating out of fear and believing the radical religious right, whose only focus is to spin lies and misinformation that boosts their agenda.

Laws should be made by using facts, **all the facts** and keeping religion out of law making.

Keeping church and state separate ensures that a select group **does not force their religious beliefs on others**. Your personal religious beliefs **must not** spill over into law making. Not everyone follows your beliefs, nor should their rights be infringed upon because of the authors religious beliefs. You wouldn't like it if others forced their beliefs onto you.

I encourage you to put your beliefs aside and preconceived judgements. Talk to a transgender person or a parent of a transgender child. Ask them their story and listen with an open heart. As lawmakers your job is to listen to **ALL** the citizens of North Dakota, not just the ones who fall in line with your beliefs.

You might be surprised in what you learn if you just open your ears and heart.

Kristie Miller

Parent of a transgender