

Senate Human Services Committee
March 15th, 2023
HB 1522 - Testimony in Opposition

Chair Lee and members of the Senate Human Services Committee, my name is Whitney Oxendahl and I am writing in opposition to HB 1522. I hope that if one of my three children or any of their friends comes out as transgender or nonbinary, they are accepted in North Dakota. If this bill is passed, it would cause kids to feel unwelcome and unsafe to live in our state.

I am saddened that this is what the Legislature is trying to govern: kids in bathrooms and preferred pronouns. I know preferred pronouns might seem mysterious to those who have not encountered them before, but they can be a big deal to people.

My child's first-grade friend just told everyone, she wants to be called by a different nickname for her first name. It has been a struggle to remember to call her by her preferred nickname, but every time we make the effort, she lights up because it's what she wants. We make the effort because it makes her feel good and seen. We hope students across the state are allowed to feel this way too. It's about kindness and respect, not about trying to make adults uncomfortable.

I ask you to please give House Bill 1522 a Do Not Pass recommendation to show our transgender and nonbinary students they are welcome here in our state. Thank you for the opportunity to share my testimony.