

To the North Dakota Legislative Council,

My name is Alayna Kraft. I am 18 years old, I am a queer student, and I am testifying in opposition of HB 1522.

School is ultimately where students spend most of their time, arguably even more than their homes. The transgender and non binary student accommodations that HB 1522 plans to criminalize will have a detrimental impact on students.

According to the National Institutes of Health, 82% of transgender people have considered suicide in their lifetimes, and 40% have acted on their thoughts. If schools ban the usage of a student's preferred name and pronouns, some of these students will lose the only acceptance they have in their lives. Taking away the love and acceptance from transgender and non binary people is not going to make people stop being transgender or non binary. It will only make them hide it from everyone, and they'll be forced to let the dysphoria pile up.

If you could give your child a medicine that would make them 33.3% less likely to consider or act on suicidal impulses, wouldn't you? Studies show that when transgender students had even just one accepting adult in their lives, one third of those asked said that they reported less suicide attempts and thoughts. Acceptance and healthcare is critical for transgender people. Schools that have teachers who use the correct name and pronouns for students are quite literally saving lives.

During this time I would like to remind you that according to the Connecticut Health Investigative Team, 21% of Generation Z identifies as being a part of the LGBTQIA+ community. It's not always obvious. Transgender and non binary people could be people you know and love, and this bill would be hurting them tremendously. There is nothing unnatural about being transgender or non binary, science has stated for years that two biological birth sexes is overly simplified. Intersex people exist, and so do people with disorders of sex development. If these people have always existed, then it is not a stretch to assume that transgender and non binary people have also always existed.

Thank you for taking time out of your day to listen to me.