

Testimony of Mia Halvorson

In Opposition of HB 1522: “Relating to providing accommodations to a transgender student; and to declare an emergency.”

March 15th, 2023

Dear Committee Members,

My name is Mia Halvorson, and I am currently a North Dakota resident and undergraduate student taking classes at both North Dakota State University and Minot State University. I am double majoring in Human Development Family Science, and Social Work, with an emphasis on women and gender studies, our youth, and marginalized communities.

The first issue I take note of is there is no fiscal note on this bill. That, in turn, indicates the sponsor of this legislation has not recognized the costly impact this bill will have. I graduated from the small school of Fairmount, North Dakota. My graduating class was just six students, with K - 12 serving roughly 100 students. The school had two men's restrooms and two women's restrooms. There are no gender-neutral locations for a transgender person to use if this bill forces transgender people out of the bathroom they are most comfortable with.

Considering there is no gender-neutral restroom, this innately forces transgender people to use the only space provided, which is a bathroom they are not comfortable with. Not all schools have the ability to provide individuals with a space they can use. This will lead to a lawsuit in a different manner than the bill intends, in which the student who doesn't have a restroom will sue for damages.

We don't have the ability to build these spaces prior to the next academic year, which starts just five months from now. School's not only don't have the funding, but it just isn't possible in the short time span.

I ask that you vote NO on HB 1522 for the reasons listed above, the reasons other individuals testifying provide, and the hundreds of additional reasons I could provide.

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to share this testimony.

-Mia Halvorson