



NORTH DAKOTA

Family Alliance LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Testimony Supporting House Bill 1522

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Good morning Madam Chair Lee and honorable members of the Senate Human Services Committee. My name is Mark Jorritsma and I am the Executive Director of North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action. I am testifying on behalf of our organization in favor of HB 1522 and respectfully request that you render a “DO PASS” on this bill.

We understand that it can be difficult for some individuals to identify themselves on the spectrum of gender, as distinct from their biological sex. That being said, our organization and its constituents believe that the issue should be kept separate from the responsibility of a school and its teachers and students. Gender is a social edifice that is created; it is not science. As such, if taken to its conclusion, we will eventually find teachers and administrative school officials having to refer to a student as anything they choose, including animals, as has already happened in some places. This bill makes an effort to avoid this kind of foolishness.

The bill does not prohibit the use of preferred pronouns by individuals with various gender identities. However, what it does is protect against being forced to use preferred pronouns, in accordance with Americans’ First Amendment Right to free speech.

Further, not using someone’s preferred pronoun can simply be a matter of confusion or unawareness. People often do not know what is going on with someone at a personal level, unless they know them closely. It cannot be expected that a person knows and uses someone’s pronouns perfectly if they do not align with common societal gender constructs. This can be a simple mistake, and no one should be punished for it.

We firmly believe that it is in the best interest of all students that schools not capitulate to politically correct accommodations for students. For this reason, North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action requests that you render a “DO PASS” on House Bill 1522.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and I will now be happy to stand for any questions.