

House Bill 1522

Madame Chairman Lee and
Members of the Committee:

My name is Andrew Alexis Varvel.

I live in Bismarck.

My sex is male.

My preferred pronouns are
rock/paper/scissors.

And my xenogender identity
is Puff the Magic Dragon.

I am here to present NEUTRAL testimony. Look at Line 10.

This legislation would be greatly strengthened if the words "in consultation with" were replaced with "while fully informing".

This is because the Century Code, and the school district, should not become a party to family quarrels.

We should not be overly concerned whenever adolescents act like smart alecks. An eye roll often works better than getting mad.

I'll put it this way - if banana says rock pronouns are banana and rock, then rock pronouns are banana and rock. That's a reference to an incident in a middle school last August - and it suggests that the next generation will do just fine.

And case you're interested, given my stance here and my opposition to child sterilization, I do plan to testify against Senate Bill 2260.

This legislation takes gender identity seriously.

Way too seriously.

Both supporters and opponents of this legislation are taking gender identity way too seriously.

If someone wants to use a toilet other than the one for their sex, then let them. I'm not talking about boys going into girls' rest rooms or vice versa. I get that.

But requiring parental permission to use a gender neutral bathroom?

Is that what we're talking about?

Some of this is an architectural problem. Our schools would probably be better off with larger numbers of small bathrooms that would handle one person at a time.

I am registering this testimony as NEUTRAL for two reasons.

One is that, with the change I'm recommending, I could support this bill. The other is that, regardless of what happens to this legislation, I'm not going to get upset.

But I want the Legislature to get the joke. To laugh along with me when I talk about my xenogender identity as Puff the Magic Dragon.

What I don't want is for the Legislature to become the butt of the joke, where legislators freak out at the first sight of smart aleckiness from a bunch of goofy middle school students.

I say, let's humor the goofiness. And remember Aesop's fable about the Sun and the North Wind. Here is the Library of Congress version:

"The North Wind and the Sun had a quarrel about which of them was stronger. While they were disputing with much heat and bluster, a Traveler passed along the road wrapped in a cloak.

'Let us agree,' said the Sun, "that he is the strong who can strip that Traveler of his cloak."

'Very well,' growled the North Wind, and at once sent a cold howling blast against the Traveler.

With the first gust of wind the ends of the cloak whipped about the Traveler's body. But he immediately wrapped it closely around him, and the harder the Wind blew, the tighter he held it to him. The North Wind tore angrily at the cloak, but all his efforts were in vain.

Then the Sun began to shine. At first his beams were gentle, and in the pleasant warmth after the bitter cold of the North Wind,

the Traveler unfastened his cloak and let it hang loosely from his shoulders. The Sun's rays grew warmer and warmer. The man took off his cap and mopped his brow. At last he became so heated that he pulled off his cloak, and, to escape the blazing sunshine, threw himself down in the welcome shade of a tree by the roadside."

Regardless of how you decide this piece of legislation, be like the Sun. Not the North Wind. Thank you.