



# NORTH DAKOTA

## *Family Alliance* LEGISLATIVE ACTION

### Testimony Supporting House Bill 1361

Jacob Thomsen, Policy Analyst  
North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action  
March 6, 2023

Good morning Madam Chair Larson and honorable members of the Senate Judiciary Committee. My name is Jacob Thomsen. I work for North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action and am testifying on behalf of our organization in support of House Bill 1361. We respectfully request that you render a “DO PASS” on this bill.

In the Great State of North Dakota, personhood grants access to 12 rights listed in our Declaration of Rights<sup>1</sup>. These rights are meaningless to try and grant to environmental elements, artificial intelligence, animals, or inanimate objects. These rights belong to a living biological person, and it should be kept that way.

In 2019, a Native American tribe in California granted the Klamath River personhood. It was overturned by a federal judge in 2020. As strange as it may seem, this is an issue that exists. With artificial intelligence on the rise in popularity, it has been brought into question for these programs and for robots. Take another example where a man who a few years ago married his computer. Legal personhood ought to be reserved for those who are granted God-given inalienable rights, not others. Aside from simply being odd, these types of actions will undoubtedly tie up our courts, when there are more urgent matters they should likely be attended to.

As for corporations and government agencies, we would leave this discussion to the committee and the bill sponsor, as in many cases these organizations are already granted legal personhood by the state.

Legal personhood comes with a list of rights that we believe are given to us by God, and enacted by the legislature. These rights certainly do not belong to environmental elements, artificial intelligence, animals, or inanimate objects. For this reason, North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action requests that you render a “DO PASS” on House Bill 1361.

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

---

<sup>1</sup> Sec. 1, 3, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 17, 25