

HB #1489 68th Legislative Session

Chairperson Larson and Committee

I am writing in opposition to HB #1489. This bill is lacking knowledge and true understanding of what transgender is. The authors of this bill not only don't know the science of what transgender is but also the process that a transgender person goes through to become whole.

How many transgender people do you know? How many parents have you sat down with and listened to their story? Very few if any. Have any of you taken time to listen to the struggles and what life is like for a transgender person and their family in North Dakota?

What this bill is doing is discriminating against a protected class of people that you do not understand and let us be honest, you don't want to understand because if you truly were working in the best interest of North Dakotans, due diligence would have been exercised here and ALL of the people sitting on this committee would have made time to talk to a transgender person or their family. I know that's not the case because no one has sat down with me although I have reached out to legislators such as Jenna Myrdal and asked to speak with her. Myrdal only told me she read my testimony and I should speak to my representative. Does that sound like a person who is wanting to have a dialogue and is in the spirit of wanting to understand this very HOT TOPIC issue? Not in my book. I called Koppelman and others too. Very few called me back. That fact alone speaks volumes of our legislators which is this body lacks empathy, compassion and the willingness to hear people. Testimonies either written or given orally in committee are restrictive and there isn't the ability to really discuss a person's story when there usually are many people standing behind you to testify and there is a time limit for the entire group.

People should NEVER stop wanting to learn and evolve. Only those who want to live in fear will not take the necessary steps to become enlightened and even entertain the fact that their beliefs could possibly be wrong.

College is a time to learn to explore your new phase in life, to learn about yourself and others who you study with, share a dorm with or even as a teammate. In ND colleges, the demographics are very diverse and different than those who live in your little home town. When I went to college, for a second time later in life, I was the OTA student (older than average) and usually the professor and I were in the same age range. Colleges also provide students the opportunity to learn and interact with people from different states and even different countries.

What an opportunity to learn about people! Many of North Dakota youth come from a small town in North Dakota and their exposure is limited to say the least. I, myself, had a very limited exposure to diversity. I did have the weird anomaly of being 1 of 3 kids in my high school who was Catholic. That fact, inevitably, proved to be a problem because I had a classmate whose parents refused to let him attend a movie with me, as friends, because of me being Catholic. This bigotry happened to me in the 1980's. Not that long ago and yet hate existed then as it does now. Why, because of ignorance and the lack of understanding.

This bill is cruel because it takes away the opportunity to play at a higher level in sports. There has not been any incident in which a transgender college athlete has dominated a sport. **Not one instance in North Dakota!**

The authors of this bill are making an issue where there isn't an issue. The governing body which handles college sports already has guidelines in place for transgender college athletes. So why are you trying to remove sports from transgender athletes? Fear, fake news and an agenda from those who fear equality and speak behind the pulpit.

Laws should be made concerning facts not myths, rumors and from people who are not experts spew all because of their ideology which is based on gossip. HB #1489 hurt and discriminates transgender people. If the authors of HB #1489 had even looked into the steps of transitioning, the authors would have discovered medical facts that prove this bill is unnecessary and just another attempt to eliminate and hopefully "eliminate queer" (**quote from Rep. Kasper on his Facebook page**) from North Dakota. In the aspect of a male to female transgender person, the blockers prevent testosterone and then when the endocrinologist sees that testosterone is to the point of hardly being detected OR isn't detected is when estrogen is started. These are "BEST PRACTICES" procedures which the medical professionals follow. Following this procedure, the **muscle mass**, body hair, facial hair and other male attributes do not form because the best time for this part of transitioning is right at the start of PUBERTY; well before the transgender person enters college. My daughter, who was born male, doesn't have an Adams apple, the body or facial hair as a male would at her age NOR THE MUSCLES of a MALE HER AGE. **As the old saying goes there is a time and place for everything and that includes medical intervention.**

The college coaches know more about this issue than yourselves, so let the college coaches do their job. What will this bill do to those teams who want to come into North Dakota and play sports but have transgender athletes? What about the backlash of this bill? This could keep North Dakota sports teams from playing teams they really want to play. Teams who would come to North Dakota to play and compete will not come and engage with the colleges of North Dakota because of the anti-transgender climate that this bill and all the other bills give the state. This bill doesn't do anything but hurt college athletes in North Dakota.

None of you are doctors so you know nothing of the process of which a transgender person must take. Had you learned and spoken to doctors who treat transgender people you would see that there is no edge that the transgender person has on the CIS athlete. Also, what about the sports that are co-ed?

I can't stress enough that knowledge is power. I encourage all of you to reach out and talk to the doctors and transgender community. Take interest in the transgender community and that is then when you see that there is nothing to fear. You will realize that we all are children of God and that this is not the way to treat a group of God's children. Also, you shouldn't judge transgender people. Judgment is to be left to God and God only. Your hunt to seek out and destroy transgender people reminds me of what Hitler did to the Jews. In Hitler's eyes, the Jews were the ruin of the world. Everything that was wrong was done or caused by Jews. Jews must be controlled, kept marginalized as much as possible and then he tried to erase Jews. Is that your vision for North Dakota? To become a state that is Aryan? Learn the facts before you vote.

Most of you were born and raised in North Dakota. This isn't the North Dakota that I grew up in nor did my mother foster in us kids to judge people who we didn't know, talk to or understand. Is that your

vision for the youth of North Dakota, to grow up judging, hating and yes discriminating others who do not look like themselves? Remember, my classmate who couldn't go the movies with me just because I was Catholic. How ridiculous! Don't we know better now in the 21st Century or are we still repeating history and refusing to learn that all people deserve equality and that fear and bigotry has no part in law making.

Respectfully,

Kristie Miller Parent of a transgender