



NORTH DAKOTA

Family Alliance LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 2150

Mark Jorritsma, Executive Director
North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action
January 16, 2023

Dear Madam Chair Larson and honorable members of the Senate Judiciary Committee. My name is Mark Jorritsma and I am the Executive Director of North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action. I am testifying in support of Senate Bill 2150 and respectfully request that you render a “DO PASS” on this bill for a number of reasons.

Let me start by saying I am not a lawyer, and Mr. Dodson has done a terrific job describing the changes this bill would have on the Century Code. That said, North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action does have additional comments on this bill.

First, from a religious point of view, we as a state have always supported the life of the unborn child. As it states at the very beginning of the ND Abortion Control Act in our Century Code:

14-02.1-01. Purpose. The purpose of this chapter is to protect unborn human life and maternal health within present constitutional limits. It reaffirms the tradition of the state of North Dakota to protect every human life whether unborn or aged, healthy or sick.

Protecting unborn life is fundamental to who we are as a state.

Second, we have a rich heritage of protecting life in our state. Years ago, when we enacted the so-called trigger law and other pro-life legislation, our legislators knew what they were doing. They were actually being strategic and anticipating the overturn of *Roe v. Wade*. Since that time, countless pro-life bills have become laws, with the support of the legislature on up to the Governor’s office.

That said, there are always parts of the Century Code that could benefit from further definition, reconciling with other laws, and general updating and clarification. This bill seeks to do just that for the various life laws on the books.

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Third, North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action has heard from individuals across the state, and certainly from the thousands of citizens we directly represent, that they are strongly in favor of this bill. They particularly appreciate the work that has been done to actively engage the medical community on this bill, since many of them are actually part of that community.

Finally, from a faith perspective, our organization, and indeed the majority of North Dakotans, favor pro-life legislation. A 2020 Pew Research study indicated that the majority of our citizens would prefer that abortion be illegal in all/most cases. We were actually ranked #10 among all states on this question. In another study, Pew Research found that 76% of North Dakotans are part of an organized religion that opposes abortion. With most of the state being faith affiliated and the Catholic and Protestant denominations representing an overwhelming majority, it is not a huge leap to see that faith goes hand-in-hand with North Dakotans' support for life.

Life is important to North Dakotans, including the lives of unborn children. From a fundamental chapter of our Century Code, to past legislation and our faith foundation, North Dakotans support life. This bill does just that, and for those reasons, North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action asks that you please vote Senate Bill 2150 out of committee with a "DO PASS" recommendation.