Hello my name is Adam Miller, a citizen of Bismarck and I am here to offer testimony against Senate Bill 2199. I would like to start with a quote from one of our founding fathers, Thomas Jefferson.

“The legitimate powers of government extend to such acts only as injurious to others. But it does me no injury for my neighbor to say there are twenty gods, or no god. It neither picks my pocket nor breaks my leg.”

I’m here to ask what I feel is a fair question to our legislative assembly and that is do you even believe in freedom anymore or is that just lip service? I feel your constituents, the citizens of this state, deserve an answer to that. To me, the answer to that question appears to me a resounding ‘no’.

In this session, this legislature has put forward bills of censorship, voter suppression, attacks on women and now this.

The first problem, the obvious one that there really is no way around, is that this is a direct affront to the first amendment. This bill is proposing I should be fined for speech, for simply calling someone as they wish to be called. Even if it gets passed, it’s almost certain to get struck down in court based on its blatant affront to the first amendment. Is this really a good use of your eighty days?

But I have a nagging feeling, this bill really has nothing to do with speech. It has to do with hatred and fear, of which neither has ever led to good governance. Your job as legislators is to serve your constituents. You do this by providing services and protections back in exchange for our taxes paid. This bill does not provide service or protection to anyone. It only provides harm. Harm to your own constituents.

The trans community has never caused me harm. Yet the people that put this bill forth clearly intend to do harm unto them. I do not need protection from the trans community. My children do not need protection from the trans community. My family and I apparently only need protection from the people that have expressed desire to do harm and that is the people in this room, the people that put forth this bill.

I ask you to vote against Senate Bill 2199 for the sake of already written law and the sake of basic human decency.