Kristie Miller

SB #2199

My name is Kristie Miller and I am a native North Dakotan and I am also a mother of a transgender person. I stand before you today to oppose SB #2199.

SB 2199 impacts the lives of transgender people, like my daughter, in North Dakota. Their strive to live a life as authentic to themselves, just as we CIS people get to live without barriers, and enjoy life. SB 2199 will force my daughter to use a name that she was given at birth. The problem is that at birth, no one could know at that time that she is transgender.

SB 2199 would force those who want to have their life whole and feel complete. Forcing someone to use a name that they never were given a chance to pick and now doesn't even match who they identify themselves to be is cruel. It's an unnecessary barrier and unjust punishment. SB 2199 would mean my daughter would have to use a male name which doesn't go with who she is now. How is that fair and just? On all her paperwork she would be forced to see and be called, to use a name which she has put behind her and has now chosen a name for herself that she does identify with and uses very happily. My daughter didn't ask to be born transgender.

SB 2199 is unfair and discriminates against transgender people for the simple fact CIS people, that is people who identify with the sex they were born as, can change their names whenever they like. By singling out transgender people and forcing these people to identify with the name or even sex they were born it discriminates because this bill neglects to look at all the science which makes up the transgender person. SB 2199 mentions using an individual's deoxyribonucleic acid as a reason as to why their sex or gender should be used as such but this neglects to look at the human and how it was formed in utero. The body is formed first, then the brain is formed. Under MRI imaging, the human brain can be identified as female or male since the two are physically formed differently. My daughter didn't ask to have her body and brain not be in synch. No one could know that at the time of her birth, her body, in utero, formed male while her brain formed female. This was told to me over a decade later, after she was born and she and I were sitting in a team of doctors at Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota.

The stress and undo harm SB 2199 will do to North Dakotans who are transgender is inhumane. Where is the empathy and compassion for these people who have to go through life every day facing people who spew hate and act ugly, even violently towards them just because these people want to live their life whole. How unfair is it that we CIS people get to go through life without these kinds of worries hanging over our heads. As a parent I worry every day that my daughter will come to harm and she has had ugly things said to her and treated very unfairly in school by peers, faculty and school administration all because of ignorance and hate. SB 2199 will cause people to go into deep depression and self-harm, move or potentially kill themselves. Are those the outcomes you're willing to live with? Passing SB 2199 and later learning that a transgender person couldn't take living a life you forced them to live by using a name and sex they had or have been trying to be behind them in order to be whole so they killed themselves?

Transgender isn't a phase, or a way to have an edge. It isn't a way to erase women in sports and it also isn't a threat to women. Transgender people have been on this earth since the beginning of time if you would like back in history. How many of you would dress as the opposite sex for the rest of your life just to make others comfortable? I like wearing female clothing so I can tell you I wouldn't like wearing male clothing for the rest of my life. How many of you would like to use a name of a different sex that you don't identify with all just in order to make strangers, people who don't know you, happy and secure? None of you would like it, I wouldn't like it either.

Transgender people just want to be treated equally and fairly just like CIS people. No one should be forced to live a life that is not true and authentic to themselves. No one is asking you to do that so please, do not mandate others to do that. Look at the science, ask the doctors questions and even talk to a transgender person or a parent of a transgender person before passing such a bill that impacts a person's life here in North Dakota drastically if not irrevocably. If you were standing in my place now you would be asking for the same empathy I seek now for my child. I'm speaking to you parent to parent.

Thank you for your time.

Kristie Miller