



**Senate
SB 2302
Testimony Kirsten Dvorak
February 1st, 2023**

Senator Larson and committee members. I am Kirsten Dvorak, Executive Director of The Arc of North Dakota; we have six chapters throughout the state of North Dakota that advocate on behalf of individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (IDD) for full inclusion in their community of choice.

The Arc of North Dakota Supports SB 2302 for the following,

1. It upholds the principles of equality and non-discrimination: Everyone, regardless of their disabilities, should have equal access to medical procedures such as organ transplantation.
2. It is based on medical criteria: The provision of an anatomical gift should only be based on medical considerations, not the individual's disability.
3. It promotes the well-being of individuals with disabilities: By removing discrimination in the organ transplant process, individuals with disabilities will have equal access to life-saving procedures, improving their quality of life and overall well-being.
4. It aligns with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): This statement supports the principles of the ADA, which prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all areas of life, including medical procedures.

However, The Arc of North Dakota asks that North Dakota adopt a nondiscrimination health coverage such as that of Oklahoma's Nondiscrimination in Health Care Coverage Act for disabilities for the following:

1. Promotes Equality and Fairness: The act promotes equality and fairness in health care by ensuring that people with disabilities are not discriminated against regarding access to health care coverage. This means that people with disabilities have the same opportunities as others to receive the care they need, regardless of their disability.
2. Reduces Health Disparities: People with disabilities often face healthcare barriers, leading to health outcomes disparities. The Nondiscrimination in Health Care Coverage Act for disabilities addresses these disparities by ensuring that people with disabilities receive equal coverage for their health care needs.

3. **Protects Health and Well-being:** People with disabilities often require more specialized healthcare services and treatment than those without disabilities. The Nondiscrimination in Health Care Coverage Act for disabilities ensures that people with disabilities have access to the care they need to maintain their health and well-being.
4. **Protects the Rights of People with Disabilities:** People with disabilities have the right to be treated with dignity and respect. The Nondiscrimination in Health Care Coverage Act for disabilities helps to protect these rights by ensuring equal access to health care coverage.
5. **Supports Independent Living:** Accessing comprehensive and appropriate health care can help people with disabilities live independently and participate in their communities. The Nondiscrimination in Health Care Coverage Act for disabilities supports independent living by providing equal access to health care.

Overall, the Nondiscrimination in Health Care Coverage Act for disabilities is a positive step towards promoting equality, reducing health disparities, protecting the health and well-being of people with disabilities, and supporting independent living. North Dakota should adopt this act to ensure that people with disabilities receive the care they need to lead healthy and fulfilling lives.

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