

# Testimony of Bill Alexson

Submitted to North Dakota Education Committee – In Support of School Chaplains

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is **Bill Alexson**, and I have spent my life serving athletes at the highest levels. I founded the **Player's Chapel Program for the NBA**, served as the **Boston Celtics' chaplain for 23 years**, and currently serve as the **chaplain for the Big 3**, which airs on CBS Sports in the summertime.

People often ask why **elite athletes**—individuals celebrated by millions—would seek the support of a chaplain. The truth is, people love these players for **what they do**, not **who they are**. And when their careers end—often by the age of 30 or 35—the world moves on, leaving them to wrestle with an **identity crisis** they never saw coming. I've witnessed the devastating effects firsthand.

I still carry the weight of a moment when I was too timid to approach two players who were struggling. One **took his own life**, and the other **died of an overdose**. That regret fuels my passion for chaplaincy, because I've also seen the **life-changing impact** of having someone there—someone who listens, cares, and provides guidance. Most of the athletes I've worked with have been able to transition into **healthy, meaningful lives** after basketball because they had that support.

But this is not just an issue for professional athletes. It is an issue for **our young people** today. **Suicides, drug overdoses, bullying, and depression** are reaching crisis levels in America's schools. **Students need someone they can trust, someone they feel safe with, someone who will walk alongside them in their struggles.** Chaplains fill that role.

I know this **not just from my work, but from my own life**. My own son was **horribly bullied** in school—so much so that he contemplated suicide. By the grace of God, he made it through and now works alongside me, **married and raising three beautiful children**. But how many others don't have that lifeline?

That's why I strongly **support bringing chaplains into public schools**. I believe this initiative will **save lives**, provide much-needed encouragement, and offer students the **moral and emotional support** they desperately need.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I urge you to support this vital cause.

Sincerely,  
**Bill Alexson**

**President, Sportspower International – (443) 629-0703**