

Do Pass Testimony of Kasey Draper, Citizen of North Dakota on HB 1491

Chairman Heinert and members of the House Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide information regarding HB 1491. I am Kasey Draper a parent that this “rule” has affected personally, and I am testifying to express my strong DO PASS on House Bill 1491. I have been affected by this rule along with numerous other parents and families in ND.

The current rule that we this affects in ND has only been in place since 2016. The opposition will suggest and put what if’s out there that there will be stacking of teams. Can I say to that, then hire better coaches that will lead teams to a championship. Hire staff that will put your school at a competitive level. Can you imagine if our corporations were told they had to turn away top talent because they would have to be hired as a junior level associate rather than an executive level associate for a year before they could be promoted.

The stacking of teams is happening already let’s be honest, we come from Williston, ND and see it all day long. I can name 6 athletes right now that compete in different school districts because of the sports they excel at, and they want to be on championship teams. Their parents have homes in one school district and “other” homes in the other school district. This rule is not hard to scoot round if you have been given the resources. We could’ve not been honest too, but we chose to be honest and forthcoming because of our integrity.

I am here to speak on behalf of the athlete that has parents that get separated. For example, mom moves to Bismarck ND and Dad stays in Williston, ND. The student/athlete chooses to move with the Mom, now on top of having to deal with parents being separated, most likely being pulled between parents, but having to make new friends, navigate through a new school, new teachers, new home, dad not being around, but is now told they can’t compete at a varsity level and have to sit a year out because their parents decided to separate. (You maybe thinking the parents are separated this rule doesn’t apply, oh but it does, parents must be legally divorced and provide proof of the divorce to the school district and NDHSA in order to play) Furthermore, may I pose the question what will the NDHSA do with the students athletes that have parents who have never been married and they demand something to prove that the student isn’t just moving to play for a better team. Again, there are plenty of loopholes to scoot around this rule...

Most athletes find their comfort in sports and competing especially if they are good. This is their out on what is happening in their lives at home. With all the discussion on the declining mental health of students from the school districts and government administration, to the point that we have classes offered to students in public education, we would want to limit the stress of transferring on an athlete and allow them to compete at the level they have worked to be at.

I will reiterate we are talking about high school sports that last 13 weeks, but may have a life time affect on a child.

Sincerely,

Kasey Draper

Parent