



# NORTH DAKOTA

## *Family Alliance* LEGISLATIVE ACTION

### Testimony in Support of House Bill 1527

Mark Jorritsma, Executive Director  
North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action  
February 12, 2025

Dear Chairman Heinert and honorable members of the House Education Committee,

I regret that I am unable to join you today, because, in addition to our organizational support for HB 1527, I have a personal linkage to WWII and atrocities committed on the Jewish people and many others. I feel strongly about this bill.

Our organization believes that God has created life in each of us and that life begins at conception and ends at natural death. For that reason, all people have worth and dignity, regardless of their race, religion, gender, or other characteristics. The right to life is foundational to all other rights, so we always try to engage on bills that support this recognition and support of these values, such as this resolution.

During WWII in occupied The Netherlands, my father and grandfather hid fleeing Jews in a small crawlspace under the floorboards of their bedroom closet in their city flat in The Hague. We found that space 70 years later on a trip to Holland (see picture in appendix). That small space became a lasting testament to our family's protection of Jews during the war. In addition, my grandfather was a military police officer and used his position in the occupied government to create false passports and other documents for Jewish refugees, with the punishment of being shot immediately if found out.

As you can see, our family has a history of helping Jewish people during the Holocaust. Also, during those years, they helped hide other non-Jewish individuals from Nazi searches as well. The Holocaust was much larger than simply a story about Jewish persecution; it included the whole of Western civilization during those years. But the seed of that story is the atrocities committed against the Jewish people.

Let's fast forward to today. According to a Pew Research poll conducted in 2023, 20% of young adults ages 18-29 believe that the holocaust was a myth.<sup>1</sup> We are seeing the rewriting of history by those who would have us forget past atrocities. We cannot let this happen. Please join us in

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.timesofisrael.com/one-in-five-young-americans-believes-the-holocaust-is-a-myth-poll-finds/>



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making sure not only the Jews fleeing in WWII are recognized for what happened to them, but also every man, woman, and child who risked their lives to stop the Holocaust.

This bill does not mandate extra hours of curriculum development or classroom time for teachers who already teach about the Holocaust. It's already happening. This bill is for teachers who avoid the Holocaust subject because of personal prejudice or simply ignorance. We certainly do not want to legislate everything that must be taught to our state's students, but neglecting one of the most defining events in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century is a travesty.

For these reasons, we ask that you render a "DO PASS" on House Bill 1527. Thank you for taking the time to read our testimony and please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

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## Appendix

