House Education Committee
House Bill 1527
Andrew Alexis Varvel

Written Testimony

February 11, 2025

9:00AM

Chairman Heinert & Members of the Committee:

My name is Andrew Alexis Varvel.

I live in Bismarck.

My opposition to HB 1527, HB 1536, and HB 1569 comes from the same place. This is a defense of local control, aversion to legislative micromanagement, and a principle that teachers should have considerable latitude to interpret statewide educational guidelines.

House Bill 1527 has good intentions. The Holocaust is an important event in world history, and the contemporary rise in anti-Semitism is indeed alarming. That said, each feature of proposed curriculum is problematic, especially as it promotes an emphasis upon Europe.

There have been many massacres due to anti-Semitism throughout history, of which the Holocaust was merely the most successful.

There have been many genocides throughout history, some perpetrated against Jews and some perpetrated against others.

The 1994 genocide in Rwanda has much to teach about the role of radio and eugenics in setting the stage for a racial massacre.

The Cambodian genocide by the Khmer Rouge has much to teach about the role of class warfare and xenophobia in mass murder.

And where does mass manslaughter come into play? The written policy of the Jackson administration in 1832 and 1833 to withhold smallpox vaccine from the Mandans and Arikara here was evil.

But was it genocide?

On page 2, lines 5-6, it talks about the "Leading role played by the United States and the armed forces of the United States..."

Yes and no. The United States was not alone. Our alliance was called **The United Nations**. Soviet troops liberated Auschwitz. And the American military had the option of bombing rail lines into and out of death camps – an option it pointedly did not exercise.

The curriculum in House Bill 1527 is too prescriptive, too intent on imposing a political orthodoxy, and too problematic in general.

Please give House Bill 1527 a **DO NOT PASS** recommendation.

Thank you.