

House Education Committee

Senate Bill 2330

Andrew Alexis Varvel

Written Testimony

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Chairman Heinert, Madame Vice Chairman Schreiber-Beck,
and Members of the House Education Committee:

My name is Andrew Alexis Varvel. I live in Bismarck.

I am a regional historian. Part of my interest in history has led me to study the history of sexual commerce both in this region and elsewhere.

Although the present version of Senate Bill 2330 is an improvement over its original version, I don't think I can support this in its present form.

Firstly, before the North Dakota State Legislature even considers applying this bill to tribal schools, I would strongly recommend that you first consult with tribal representatives on the subject.

Senate Bill 2330 is overly prescriptive and should not clutter the Century Code. Although school districts should be encouraged to teach children how to protect themselves from human traffickers, the Century Code should not mandate a specific way to teach children about this.

For example, before teaching children “the victim profiling tactics of human traffickers”, please consider whether you are teaching children the basics of how to become a pimp and take advantage of their classmates.

Okay – you know and I know that it is a vicious form of abuse for anyone to make an indecent proposal to pay a child to pull down his pants.

Yet, telling children about this horror, even in middle school, may risk providing bullies with evil ideas on how they can abuse other children.

SB 2330 talks of “the role of online computer activity and pornography”...

Pornographic sites have many roles. Not just one. One is to indoctrinate people into a false narrative about what sex is – and what it can be. Another is to function as an interactive pornographic pipeline to gradually turn civilian women out to become prostitutes in real life. Yet another is to make men become less interested in real life procreative sex than in watching more and more addictive pornography. Another is to provide erotic attention to young women, especially those who have been body shamed, who get too easily flattered by men who are willing to pay.

And that's just for starters.

We need to be very cautious about what we put into the Century Code.

Yet, one thing that Senate Bill 2330 does right is on page 2, line 16.

It refers to the “difference between human trafficking and prostitution”.

Yes, there is a difference, a difference our state should actually address.

Our state has a problem with human trafficking, including sex trafficking. If even one person get trafficked in our state, that is one person too many.

The State of North Dakota should not be putting the moral burden of fighting sex trafficking onto children in our schools when our state is hardly pulling its own weight in cracking down on sex trafficking.

While we should encourage people to become saints, we should recognize that arresting sex traffickers will require the cooperation of sinners.

Rather than assume that we necessarily know what the best strategy is for combating sex trafficking, we should have an interim study on the subject. This topic should be studied in depth, and we should be willing to listen to people who have a vested interest in stopping sex trafficking in its tracks.

Hopefully, the Legislature could eventually create an incentive structure to encourage people to report human trafficking to the proper authorities.

To this effect, here is a sweeping hoghouse amendment to Senate Bill 2330. I think we can all agree that human trafficking is wrong, and that this includes sex trafficking, so I hope that we can all get behind a major interim study to determine how sex trafficking can be stopped in its tracks.

The way this proposed study is worded is carefully designed to encourage prostitutes to come out of the shadows to present their own ideas on how sex trafficking can be stopped, because we really can't do it without them.

The proposed hoghouse amendment is up on your computer. If you amend Senate Bill 2330 with it, please give it **DO PASS** recommendation.

Otherwise, please give Senate Bill 2330 a **DO NOT PASS** recommendation.

Thank you.

I am open for questions from this committee.