

Dear Members of the House Government and Veterans Affairs Committee,

I am writing to express strong opposition to House Bill 1446, which seeks to amend and reenact various sections of the North Dakota Century Code relating to the placement of candidates' names on the primary election ballot and the repeal of certain sections related to party organization endorsements and certificates of endorsement.

This bill undermines the autonomy of political parties by imposing restrictive measures on how they can endorse and nominate candidates. Political parties play a crucial role in our democratic process by vetting and endorsing candidates who align with their values and policies. Limiting their ability to do so weakens the party system and diminishes the quality of candidates presented to voters.

By repealing sections related to party organization endorsements, this bill restricts the choices available to voters. Endorsements provide valuable information to voters about which candidates have the support and confidence of their party. Removing this mechanism reduces transparency and makes it more difficult for voters to make informed decisions at the ballot box.

House Bill 1446 erodes fundamental democratic principles by centralizing control over the nomination process and reducing the influence of grassroots party members. Democracy thrives when there is broad participation and diverse representation. This bill moves us in the opposite direction by concentrating power and limiting the voices of ordinary citizens.

In conclusion, House Bill 1446 poses significant threats to the integrity of our democratic process, the autonomy of political parties, and the rights of voters. I urge a DO NOT PASS on this bill and instead support measures that enhance transparency, inclusivity, and fairness in our electoral system.

Thank you for your consideration

Sincerely,

Josey Milbradt