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North Dakota House Human Services Committee

North Dakota Legislative Assembly

600 E Boulevard Ave

Bismarck, ND 58505

Dear Members of the House Human Services Committee,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to HB 1144, which seeks to restrict restroom access for transgender students in public schools. This legislation is not only unnecessary but also harmful to transgender individuals and the broader community.

Evidence from numerous states and cities with transgender-inclusive restroom policies demonstrates that such policies do not pose safety risks. Transgender individuals have used public restrooms aligned with their gender identity for decades without causing harm or an increase in incidents. Law enforcement officials and sexual assault advocates widely affirm that claims suggesting otherwise are unfounded.

This bill's provision to force transgender students to use separate or private bathrooms is both impractical and stigmatizing. While private bathrooms can be a helpful option for anyone seeking additional comfort, requiring only transgender students to use them isolates these individuals and perpetuates damaging stereotypes.

Excluding transgender individuals from public restrooms does nothing to protect privacy, which is already ensured by stall doors and existing norms. Rather than creating barriers, we should focus on fostering understanding and mutual respect. HB 1144 risks further marginalizing an already vulnerable population, particularly non-binary individuals who often face additional challenges in navigating gendered spaces safely.

Moreover, this legislation does not uphold religious freedom but instead undermines the principle of equal treatment under the law. Comprehensive nondiscrimination policies do not infringe on religious beliefs; they ensure all individuals, including transgender people, can live with dignity and participate fully in public life.

I urge the committee to reject HB 1144. Transgender and non-binary youth need our support, not legislation that alienates and discriminates against them. Let us work together to build a more inclusive North Dakota where everyone feels safe and valued.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Megan Conklin

Beach Pride Family