

WRITTEN TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO HB 1144

House Human Services Committee on House Bill 1144

Date of Hearing: January 27, 2025

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This written testimony is presented in opposition to HB 1144, which prohibits transgender and non-binary individuals from utilizing the restroom, locker rooms, or showers of their identified gender and discriminates against the transgender and nonbinary communities.

This bill would allow individuals to intentionally misgender students, which infringes on the rights of children to a free and appropriate education by effectively making misgendering a condition of access to education. Use of preferred pronouns improves the mental health of transgender and non-binary individuals. A supportive and affirmative educational environment lowers suicide attempts. There is no harm to other parties when you address someone with their preferred pronouns. The only harm involved in this proposed legislation is the prohibition of providing gender-affirming support to the transgender and non-binary community.


This bill also takes aim at transgender or non-binary students utilizing bathrooms, locker rooms, or showers that match their gender identity. Supporters of the bill claim it is necessary to protect the privacy and safety of women and girls. However, there is no research or data suggesting that transgender women pose a threat or misuse bathrooms for voyeuristic purposes. If the concern is based on the idea of a man disguising himself as a woman to harm others, this would represent a crime committed by a straight male, not a transgender woman. Transgender individuals simply seek to use these facilities like anyone else, without causing harm or disruption.

This bill also effectively prohibits participation of transgender and nonbinary athletes in sports. Like all young people, transgender students want to participate in school activities with their friends, have a community that is supportive, and be part of a team. They are not seeking an advantage to win awards. Sports teach students many things: confidence, sportsmanship, teamwork, and leadership. Transgender students need these skills, just like any other student.

Every person (regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation) wants to be accepted as they are. More than half of transgender and nonbinary youth have contemplated or attempted suicide.¹ If those same students are surrounded by peers, teachers, coaches, and others who are affirming, the suicide rate lowers significantly. Excluding or marginalizing transgender students puts their mental health and physical safety at serious risk.

Please do not further marginalize the transgender and nonbinary community in North Dakota, which already suffers from higher rates of suicide and harassment. Affirming an individual's preferred pronouns lowers the risk of suicide and self-harming. Transgender and nonbinary individuals need compassion and inclusion. All North Dakotans deserve dignity and respect and the full protection of their rights.

Please oppose HB1144.



¹ National Survey on LGBTQ Youth Mental Health 2024 - <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/survey-2024/>