



North Dakota House of Representatives

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COMMITTEES:

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Chairman Ruby and members of the Health and Human Service Committee:

For the record my name is Lori VanWinkle, and I represent District 3 out of Minot. I'm here to present HB 1430 and testify in support of HB 1430, which seeks to assert the rights of social workers and their clients to pursue therapy that aligns with their core beliefs in regards to sexuality and gender identity.

I bring this bill in response to the change that was made to administrative rules for social workers in June, of 2021. The Interim Administrative Rules Committee amended rule 75.5-02-06.1.01, enacted changes that forces social workers to **ONLY** affirm an individual questioning their gender identity or sexual attraction. In other words, current administrative rule makes it an **ETHICAL VIOLATION** for a licensed social worker to offer questioning individuals counseling practices or treatment services that align with heterosexuality or biological gender, even if they request it!

Let me quote the rule: "... it is a violation of the code of ethics for a social worker licensed by the board to engage in any practices or treatments that attempt to change or repair the sexual orientation or gender identity of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning individuals..."

HB1430 would change this inequitable and restraining rule, and once again would allow for choice and options for individuals, by allowing providers freedom to use all the tools in their tool belt for helping people if they desire the help.

Historically we have already seen that this type of conversion therapy has had devastating ramifications. For example, consider well known **Chloe Cole**, who is a detransition youth, she is just one of the many young women who has suffered the medical abuse that follows affirmation only therapy. For Chloe, and countless others, the road of affirmation leads one way, the way of an ever-progressing journey from social transition to puberty

blockers, to cross sex hormones, to plastic surgery, to body mutilation! All of which will leave the individual with a complete myriad of serious health side effects and pain!

Questions sexuality and gender identity are inherently ideological, and to prohibit counseling that aligns with traditional or Biblical viewpoints is religious discrimination and promotes substandard care to individuals whose beliefs run contrary to the dogmas that dominate the mental health profession. To say same-sex attraction or gender identity should never be question, is to reduce therapy to a narrow-minded ideological struggle session for those individuals who would rather come to accept their biological gender or would rather not have feelings of same-sex attraction.

We cannot deny that **same-sex attraction is changeable**, even if the mainstream narrative wants to force us to believe otherwise! There are countless testimonies of people finding that traditional values and Biblical principles have helped them. The internet and churches worldwide are full of testimonies, and to name a few: Beckett cook, Sy Rogers, Jackie hill Perry, and Rosaria Butterfield all identified as gay, but no longer do are proof that a one size fits all approach to therapy is misguided, at best.

I urge you to support HB 1430 with a **due pass motion** to ensure that there is equality in the care social workers can provide to their clients. Social workers should be free to direct their healthcare to serve the needs of their clients WITHOUT forcing them to "affirm" an ideology if that isn't desired treatment, people deserve the treatment options they see fit for themselves, and a social worker's license should not be in jeopardy for doing their job. Thank you, I stand for questions.