

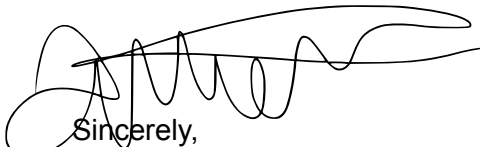
My name is Michelle Nitengale, and I am a North Dakota resident, military spouse, and educator, writing in strong support of HB 1478. This bill is essential in protecting the rights of individuals to access contraceptive healthcare, a fundamental component of personal health, family planning, and well-being.

Contraceptive healthcare is a cornerstone of preventive medicine and allows individuals to make informed decisions about their futures, whether that involves timing their pregnancies or managing medical conditions like endometriosis or polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS). Access to affordable and comprehensive contraceptive care empowers individuals to safeguard their physical health, take control of their reproductive health, and achieve their personal and professional goals without unnecessary barriers.

As a military spouse, I have witnessed the unique challenges that come with balancing family planning, healthcare access, and financial stability. For many families like mine, insurance plans and healthcare options can be limiting, particularly when access to contraceptives is treated as optional rather than essential. By passing HB 1478, North Dakota can set a powerful precedent by ensuring that everyone—regardless of income, insurance coverage, or geographic location—can access the contraceptive healthcare they need.

This legislation goes beyond healthcare access; it addresses equity, dignity, and the right to make private decisions about one's own body. Without adequate protections, individuals and families face unnecessary hardships, including unintended pregnancies, financial strain, and adverse health outcomes. Supporting HB 1478 ensures that all North Dakotans have the resources to make the best decisions for themselves and their families.

I urge you to vote in favor of HB 1478. By doing so, you will affirm North Dakota's commitment to equity and compassion, ensuring that contraceptive healthcare is treated as a right, not a privilege. Thank you for your time, consideration, and dedication to improving the health and well-being of our state's residents.



Sincerely,
Michelle Nitengale