

House Human Services Committee
HB 1478
January 29, 2025

Chair Ruby and members of the Committee,

My name is Caitlin Scheresky and I am a senior at the University of North Dakota pursuing an English major and Political Science minor. I'm writing to express my strong support for House Bill 1478 which seeks to protect access to birth control for all individuals in our state.

Birth control is far more than a means of family planning—it is a critical component of healthcare. Throughout my time at UND, I have met many classmates who rely on contraception for medical reasons, such as managing endometriosis, polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS), and other health conditions. Birth control allows them to take control of their health, reduce pain, and maintain their quality of life.

For others, birth control is an essential tool for family planning. It empowers individuals and couples to determine the timing and size of their families, which is vital for achieving personal, educational, and career goals.

For the last two years, I have served as the President of The F Word, UND's feminist student organization. One of the events we hold in the spring semester is the Safe Sex Kit Project, in which we collect monetary and physical donations, put together kits with over-the-counter contraception and resource information, and distribute them around UND's campus and the greater Grand Forks community. I've seen firsthand the impact that birth control and other forms of reproductive healthcare can have on the quality of life for people who can get pregnant—including myself. For me, birth control isn't just about pregnancy prevention, it's necessary for regulating my menstrual cycle.

Even beyond that, it is instrumental in the lives of those with health conditions impacting their reproductive organs and quality of life. I cannot stress enough how birth control is a critical part of reproductive healthcare. The right to birth control cannot be lost to the generations of people who need it to live fulfilling, healthy, and safe lives. Birth control saves lives; the loss of access to critical reproductive healthcare would be deadly. I beg you, do not turn your backs on your constituents—vote in favor of HB 1478.

As a young person preparing for my future, I want to live in a state that respects and values my right to make decisions about my health. Protecting access to birth control sends a clear message that North Dakota supports its residents' autonomy and well-being. It also

demonstrates a commitment to creating an environment where young people like me can thrive without fear of losing access to essential healthcare.

I urge you to support HB 1478. This bill is about more than health care; it's about equity, opportunity, and creating a state where we all feel valued and supported.

Thank you for your time and for considering my perspective. I hope you will stand with students, families, and individuals who rely on birth control to live healthy and empowered lives.

Sincerely,
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