



NORTH DAKOTA

Family Alliance LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Testimony Opposing House Bill 1488

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Good afternoon, Chairman Ruby and honorable members of the House Human Services Committee. My name is Mark Jorritsma, and I am the Executive Director of North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action. I am testifying on behalf of our organization in opposition to House Bill 1488 and respectfully request that you render a DO NOT PASS on this bill.

It's difficult to know where to begin on the issues we have with HB 1488. For the sake of brevity, let me list some of the major ones.

1. Removal of the existing North Dakota 6-week abortion ban in the Century Code.
2. Implementation of a fundamental language change from “unborn child” to “fetus”.
3. Creation of a rather “Orwellian” Abortion Approval Committee (AAC)
4. Prevention of any accountability by AAC members by concealing their identities and preventing release of meeting conversations held by the committee.
5. Allowing hospitals to provide abortions strictly under new provisions, intended to shield them from adverse public funding decisions.
6. No longer requiring that mothers be informed that:
 - The abortion will terminate the life of a whole, separate, unique, living human being.
 - Medical assistance benefits may be available for prenatal care, childbirth, and neonatal care.
 - Agencies offer alternatives to abortion and a list of such agencies.
 - The father is liable to assist in the support of her child.
 - She is free to withhold or withdraw her consent to the abortion at any time without affecting her right to future care or treatment and without the loss of any state or federally funded benefits to which she might otherwise be entitled.

Ladies and gentlemen, this is far from a complete list of all the problematic provisions of this bill. If passed, HB 1488 would undo existing pro-life legislation in our state.

Aside from the aforementioned problems with HB 1488, there is a larger and more strategic reason to vote this bill out of committee with a DO NOT PASS recommendation. As you are all aware, ever since the Dobbs decision, our state has been fighting to preserve its pro-life rights. The lawsuit brought by the Red River Women’s Clinic began in 2022 and continues today. Changing our abortion laws in any dramatic fashion, particularly in the wrong direction such as this bill does, could negatively affect the outcome of the judicial process.

House Bill 1488 has been described in the media as a “middle ground”¹ bill. This is not that bill. This is fundamentally a pro-abortion bill. Voting it out of this committee with anything but a resounding DO NOT PASS would contribute to more abortions in North Dakota and an unmitigated mess of our state’s abortion laws. For all these reasons, North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action strongly opposes HB 1488 and respectfully requests that you vote this bill out of committee with a DO NOT PASS recommendation.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify, and I’d be happy to stand for any questions.

¹ <https://northdakotamonitor.com/2024/12/04/gop-lawmaker-to-propose-bill-preserving-some-abortion-access-in-north-dakota/>