

North Dakota

Travel Alliance Partnership

Testimony of Scooter Pursley
Executive Director, ND Travel Alliance Partnership
In Opposition to HB 1150
January 15, 2025

Chair Warrey and members of the House Industry, Business and Labor Committee:

My name is Scooter Pursley and I am the executive director of the North Dakota Travel Alliance Partnership (TAP). TAP is a coalition of travel industry stakeholders, including convention and visitors bureaus, state attractions, businesses and others who help make tourism the third-largest industry in North Dakota's. On behalf of the tourism industry and its partners, TAP asks that you oppose HB 1150, a bill looking to reimpose restrictions of the North Dakota Blue Law relaxed by legislative action in 2019.

From an economic standpoint alone, North Dakota would stand to lose some of the \$3.3 billion spent annually by visitors who come to the state on the weekend and spend Sunday mornings shopping before returning home. Visitors to our cities for other events, like youth tournaments, would not be able to make a run to the store between games.

North Dakota's visitor economy grows when more people travel to and within the state, and visitors spend more time within a destination. They arrive with expectations that North Dakota offers the same conveniences as every other state in the nation, including shopping on Sunday mornings. If stores are closed, visitors leave frustrated perhaps not to return in the future.

There have been no studies showing that the demise of the nation's last Blue Law has had a negative effect on the state. In fact, longer hours of operation have led to increased spending and tax collection at businesses that choose to open before noon on Sundays.

Early Sunday opening is a choice, not a requirement. Noon Sunday opening would be a requirement, not a choice. The choice is simple. Sunday opening is a matter best left up to individual business owners and North Dakota consumers and not the state.

TAP asks that you consider defeating HB 1150.

Thank you for your consideration.

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