

To North Dakota Lawmakers:

I want to express my opposition to the proposal to reinstate Sunday Closing Laws in our state. What is the expressed purpose for doing this? If it is for the purpose of encouraging church attendance, I see that as an intrusion of government into religion. The First Amendment says, "*Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; . . .*" I believe that principle should be applied at the State level. If church attendance has dropped since 2019 when the law was repealed, are there statistics that show that it was due to stores being open during church service time? If people attend church only because they couldn't go shopping at that time, how sincere are they in their faith? A law to close stores doesn't make anyone a Christian. Only a deep, personal faith in Jesus Christ makes that difference in someone's life. If someone has that kind of experience, they will probably be in church even if the stores are open. To be open or closed should be left up to the business management.

Please do not confuse what the Bible calls the Sabbath with what many Christians call the Lord's Day. According to the Bible, Sabbath is the seventh day of the week, commonly called Saturday. (see Exodus 20:8-11) Sunday, the first day of the week, is not the Sabbath. It never has been. The Bible does not authorize any change. God pronounced the seventh day holy and blessed it. (see Genesis 2:1-3) He never blessed any other day.

Thank you for considering these thoughts.

Sincerely,  
Kimber Hoffman