



RE: Support HB 1231

Dear Members of the North Dakota House Judiciary Committee,

I am writing on behalf of the National Association for Rational Sexual Offense Laws (NARSOL) to express our strong support for House Bill 1231, a critical piece of legislation that introduces a thoughtful, evidence-based approach to sexual offender registration requirements. HB1231 represents a significant step forward in criminal justice reform, grounded in robust research and understanding of offender rehabilitation. Our support stems from several key evidence-based considerations:

1. **Recidivism Research:** Extensive studies demonstrate that sexual offenders have remarkably low recidivism rates. Sexual recidivism rates also decline substantially over time, with most offenders not reoffending after five years.
2. **Risk Assessment:** The bill's provision for low-risk offenders to petition for registry removal aligns with contemporary risk assessment methodologies.
3. **Reintegration Support:** By providing a pathway for registry removal, HB1231 addresses a critical barrier to successful reintegration. Excessive registration requirements impede social rehabilitation and actually increase potential recidivism risks.
4. **Individualized Approach:** The bill's nuanced approach allows for individualized assessment beyond blanket punitive measures. This reflects the contemporary criminological understanding that one-size-fits-all policies are ineffective in managing sexual offense risks.
5. **Victim Considerations:** The bill thoughtfully includes provisions for victim notification and participation – a balanced approach that respects both rehabilitation and victim/survivor perspectives.
6. **Clean Record Requirements:** The bill's stringent requirements for a "clean record" - including successful completion of treatment, no new felonies, and successful completion of supervised release - provide robust safeguards for public safety.
7. **Cost-Effectiveness:** Perpetual registration imposes significant administrative costs. By reducing the number of registrants, this is sound fiscally responsible policy.

The seven-year compliance period and low-risk designation provide crucial safeguards, ensuring that only individuals with consistent rehabilitation can petition for relief. This approach reflects the most current understanding of sexual offense management: dynamic risk assessment, rehabilitation potential, and proportional intervention.

NARSOL strongly urges the committee to support HB1231. This bill represents an evidence-driven, compassionate approach to sexual offense management that prioritizes public safety, individual rehabilitation, and societal reintegration.

Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation.

Sincerely,
Justin L. Hillman
NARSOL Dakota's Advocates
jhillman@narsol.org

Cc: Brenda V. Jones, Executive Director (bjones@narsol.org)