



RE: Support for HB1386, but Not Registration Requirements

Dear Members of the North Dakota House Judiciary Committee,

I am writing on behalf of the National Association for Rational Sexual Offense Laws (NARSOL) North Dakota Advocates regarding House Bill 1386, which proposes to amend sections 12.1-27.2-01 and 12.1-27.2-04.1 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to the prohibition of possessing certain computer-generated images.

NARSOL strongly supports the bill's intent to prohibit child sexual abuse materials, including computer-generated images. We recognize the serious harm caused by such content and agree that legislative action is necessary to address this issue.

However, we must express our opposition to adjusting the severity and reinforcing the use of the sex offense registry by amending related registerable offenses as proposed in this bill. Our position is based on extensive research and evidence regarding the ineffectiveness of sex offender registries. We urge the committee to consider the following points:

1. Registries do not effectively deter crime. Studies have consistently shown that sex offender registries do not significantly reduce sexual offense rates or protect the public.
2. Registries do not reduce recidivism rates. Research indicates that registries have little to no impact on recidivism rates among those required to register.
3. Registration requirements create substantial obstacles for individuals attempting to reintegrate into society, often hindering their ability to find housing, employment, and support systems.
4. The effects of registration extend beyond the individual, causing undue hardship on family members, including children of registrants.
5. The maintenance and enforcement of registries consume significant law enforcement and administrative resources that could be better utilized for more effective public safety measures.

We believe that the prohibition of child sexual abuse materials, including computer-generated images, can be effectively addressed without expanding the scope of the registry. Alternative approaches, such as diversion programs, education programs, and support for victims, may prove more effective in combating this issue.

NARSOL respectfully requests that the committee reconsider the inclusion of this new offense as a registerable crime.

Thank you for your consideration of our position on this important issue.

Sincerely,

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