

February 15, 2025

Mr. Chairman and members of the ND House Judiciary Committee—

My name is Natalie Couture, and I write to you as a citizen of Minot, North Dakota, in opposition of HCR 3013. As a lifelong citizen of this nation, I ask you to consider the impact that defining marriage as an act between *two individuals* rather than defining marriage as an act between *one biological man and one biological woman* has had on you, personally, and the rights and liberties you may or may not hold as someone married to another individual. As stated within this resolution, the United States Declaration of Independence does declare that all men are created equal, yet the history of this nation proves that “equality” was not always a possibility for women or for those formerly enslaved. Clearly, interpretation of these historical documents is incredibly nuanced.

In 2015, the Supreme Court of the United States deemed it unconstitutional for states to prohibit same-sex couples from marrying or having their marriage recognized in any state. I do believe that the Supreme Court has a far better understanding of what does or does not align to the American Constitution’s intentions, especially considering that during its penning, slavery was a legal practice, and women were not permitted to own property. If you feel that the people in the state of North Dakota, whom you represent, believe *those* practices were and are still acceptable, I do not believe you know North Dakotans at all.

Representatives, I write to you as a woman, happily partnered with a man, with the intent to marry in the future. I can honestly say that throughout my life, the change in definition of marriage to indicate union between *two individuals* versus a union of *one biological man and one biological woman* has not had a single impact on my ability to seek out a male partner who would hopefully become my lawfully wedded husband one day, with the same rights and privileges as any other couple who looks to marry. My personal, moral thoughts of whether marriage between a same-sex couple is “right” have no bearing on a same-sex couple’s livelihood or choices, nor should they. My rights in marriage are not diminished through the act of any same-sex couple looking to celebrate their union through marriage; I would not and do not stand to lose any privileges as result of same-sex couples marrying.

HCR 3013 is flawed and does not align with the priorities of this state nor the people within it. Any two individuals *committed* to legal partnership through marriage should have the right to do so, and state Century Code should reflect without exclusion to any *committed* couple. This would conflict with the current proposal outlined in HCR 3013. I urge you to give this resolution a “Do Not Pass.”

Please reach out with any questions you have about this message—

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