

Chairman Beard and members of the Senate Education Committee:

My name is Kristin Nelson and I serve on the Fargo Board of Education's Governmental Affairs Committee and am the designated legislative spokesperson on this topic. I am writing to you today to encourage you to vote **DO NOT PASS on HB 1144**.

Positive School Culture: students who are supported by teachers are more successful in school and have better outcomes. Something as simple as supporting a child's name, nickname, or pronouns can help a student feel accepted as a valuable member of their school committee. Supporting students by using their chosen name or pronouns is also a sign of basic respect.

Students' Rights, Safety and Privacy: Privacy, safety, and security should be inherent in a student's school experience. Single stall bathrooms with a communal sink offer all these things to students. Teachers of any gender can monitor all students using the bathroom without extra staff monitoring two separate bathrooms. Single stalls allow only one student at a time to be in a stall which is safe and private. This type of bathroom offers students who menstruate a private space to change their menstruation products without having to do it in a bathroom full of other people.

Unplanned District Expenses: Remodeling bathrooms is expensive. Many schools in North Dakota have single stalls with communal sinks. As mentioned above, communal sinks are easier for school staff to monitor and manage. Schools face a large financial hit if they must remodel their current bathroom setup. One district in the state estimates their costs to remodel at one million dollars per school. That money could be better used for students and resources rather than to comply with a bill that is an answer to a problem that doesn't exist.

State Resources and Overreach: This bill is written so that anyone suspecting a school of violating any part of this law would be able to make a complaint. This will tie up precious resources and time in the AGs office they could be using to prosecute real crimes. This bill is an example of gross government overreach; the state should not have a say in the design (outside of code enforcement and safety) of our buildings.

This bill will not improve student outcomes or do anything to move our state forward. For those reasons I ask for a **DO NOT PASS on HB 1181**.

Respectfully submitted:

Kristin Nelson (she/her)

Fargo Public Schools Board Member