



# NORTH DAKOTA

## *Family Alliance* LEGISLATIVE ACTION

### Testimony in Support of House Bill 1144

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Good morning Chairman Beard and honorable members of the Senate Education Committee, My name is Mark Jorritsma, and I am the Executive Director of North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action. I am testifying on behalf of our organization in support of House Bill 1144 and respectfully request that you render a “DO PASS” on this bill.

Over the past few years, it has become apparent that schools, through ignorance, lack of motivation, or willful defiance, do not always follow recently enacted portions of the Century Code that apply to them. An obvious case of this latter situation was the statement by the Superintendent of the Fargo Public School District that they would not comply with portions of HB 1522 from last session, now enacted in §14-02.4-15.2 and §15.1-06-21 of our Century Code.

Sadly, it appears that further clarification and stipulations must be put into law to ensure school districts cannot openly defy North Dakota law. Further, it is clear from how things transpired in this situation, that there must be some consequence for this type of action. HB 1144 seeks to accomplish these objectives, therefore, North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action supports it.

What disturbs me is that significant work on HB 1522 last session was ignored by one of the largest school districts in the state. Those responsible for educating our children need to understand that laws are not merely suggestions, they are requirements. There are 141 of you in this body who have made a commitment to represent North Dakotans by creating laws that improve our quality of life and preserve our values. Let’s ensure that happens.

For these reasons, North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action requests that you render a “DO PASS” on House Bill 1144. Thank you for the opportunity to testify and I’d be happy to stand for any questions.