



HB 1181

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Chair Beard and Members of the Committee: My name is Carter Gill and I am Vice President of Governmental Affairs for the North Dakota Student Association. I am here today in opposition of HB 1181.

The North Dakota Student Association is dedicated to ensuring that students have a voice at the table in policy that affects higher education. We consist of delegates from each of the 11 public North Dakota University System (NDUS) institutions, meeting monthly to engage students in discussions about North Dakota higher education policy. Since 1969, our mission has been to empower students, create collaboration between the student bodies of the North Dakota public universities, and to provide a student perspective on higher education policy.

While the NDSA does appreciate the amendments made to this bill that removed DNA testing requirements, the NDSA still remains in opposition to HB 1181 as shown in our resolution against this bill, [NDSA-19-2425: A Resolution in Opposition to HB 1181](#). The opinion of the scientific and medical community is that sex and gender are two entirely different concepts.¹ HB 1181 conflates the two as being the same. According to a report by the [UCLA Williams Institute](#), 0.43% of adults in North Dakota are transgender. This means that about 2,500 adults will be negatively affected by this legislation. This bill also still fails to recognize intersex individuals, about 2% of the global population, and their unique relationship to sex and gender.

This bill essentially does two things regarding higher education: make the lives of trans students currently in the NDUS harder and stands as a message to out-of-state trans students that they are

¹What Do We Mean by Sex and Gender? Carolyn M. Mazure. September 19 2021. <https://medicine.yale.edu/news-article/what-do-we-mean-by-sex-and-gender/>.

not welcome in North Dakota. Why is it necessary to pass legislation that does nothing but harm individuals of an incredibly small minority? Minnesota has made itself a trans refuge state, which for trans students in North Dakota, why would they stay in a state that is actively working to make them not welcome in their own state when the state across the Red River will welcome them? According to the [Trevor Project](#), “Nearly 1 in 3 LGBTQ youths said their mental health was poor ‘most of the time or always’ as a result of anti-LGBTQ legislation or policies.” For those students who do stay in North Dakota, the passage of HB 1181 would be another reminder to them that they are not welcome in this state.

As is the case with NDUS cisgender students, transgender students should be afforded the same accommodations as cisgender students with being addressed in a manner consistent with their gender identity and expression.

This bill goes against the consensus of the science and medical communities and is damaging to the LGBTQIA+ students in North Dakota, so on behalf of the North Dakota Student Association, I ask that you give HB 1181 a DO NOT PASS recommendation.