

To the Members of the ND Senate Education Committee and the Chair:

My name is Alyssa Klossgaard, and I'm 27 years old and I was born and raised in North Dakota, have lived here all my life, and I have been queer all of my life. Although I do not personally identify as transgender, the people whom I cherish the most do.

I urge a "DO NOT PASS" on HB. When legislation like this comes up, especially after it has failed in previous sessions, it sends the loud and clear message to transgender people that they should not be here.

These people are my closest friends and people that I consider to be family. I have heard their growing-up stories; they are full of bullying, addiction, and suicide attempts. However, their stories are also ones of survival, resilience, and hope. The hope that one day queer people wouldn't have to fight for the North Dakota Niceness, and that we would all be respected as human beings regardless of how we identified. This is especially true for North Dakota's transgender and gender non-conforming community. The North Dakota that I know and love is one that values community and dignity. With bills like these, it feels like the exact opposite message is being spread. This bill micromanages identities, fans the flames of the broader culture war, which in turn has severe consequences in regards to the mental health and legal protections of North Dakota's transgender community. Transgender people are not some scary boogeymen, they're electricians, carpenters, landscapers, fast food workers; they are your neighbors and community members.

Thank you for your time,
Alyssa Klossgaard