

Chairman Beard and Members of the Education Committee,

My name is Kimberly Hurst and I reside in District 1, and I am testifying neutral on SB 2330 today.

I believe this is an important issue in our country, and our children should receive education on sex trafficking. However, I am concerned about the curriculum and resource materials that will be used. Sensitive topics, such as this or even ones like suicide, can be challenging to address in a school setting. While these discussions are essential, they must be approached carefully and with appropriate parental involvement and consent.

For example, last school year in WBSD#7, the district conducted a suicide prevention day that included an emotionally intense video. The content was so distressing that both students and some teachers became visibly upset. While the intent was to raise awareness, the delivery inadvertently created additional mental health concerns and for some it did more harm than good.

Similarly, sex trafficking is a serious and impactful subject for young children. Making education on this topic mandatory raises concerns about how the information will be presented and the potential emotional impact on students. It is crucial to ensure that such sensitive topics are handled in

a way that is both effective and appropriate for the well-being of all children.

In addition to concerns about content, I also question how this topic will be appropriately taught to tender-aged children, particularly those as young as five years old. Introducing such sensitive subjects at an early age necessitates careful consideration of the potential impact on children's mental and emotional well-being. It is also important to recognize that most elementary-aged children—especially those in kindergarten through fourth grade—are not yet familiar with the concept of sex. Therefore, mandating school districts to introduce a topic as complex and sensitive as sex trafficking to such young students is deeply worrisome. It risks exposing them to material that may not be developmentally appropriate. Given the nature of this subject, parents should have the opportunity to preview all educational materials, and parental consent should be a required component of any curriculum addressing this issue.

These are some of the concerns I have with the bill in its current form. However, as previously stated, I fully support having these important conversations with our children. While I believe such discussions are essential, they should be approached with caution and require full parental involvement. I respectfully urge you to carefully consider the sensitive nature of this bill and how it can be implemented effectively and

appropriately. Thank you for your time, attention to this matter, and dedicated service to the state of North Dakota.

Kimberly Hurst