

Chair Beard, Vice Chair Lemm, and members of the Committee:

On behalf of the ACLU of North Dakota, I submit testimony in opposition to Senate Bill 2330 on human trafficking, exploitation prevention, and awareness education—in its current form.

Through policy advocacy and litigation, the American Civil Liberties Union has long been dedicated to holding the United States accountable to international human rights laws and standards as well as the rights guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution. A priority of this work has been to address human trafficking, and education plays an important role in these efforts.

SB 2330 is a noble effort to raise awareness, promote resources, mitigate risk, and protect children and adults from the dangers of trafficking. However, the proposed legislation is significantly incomplete without the inclusion of comprehensive sex education.

Currently, North Dakota schools are required to teach sex education, however the curriculum is not required to be comprehensive, with no requirements for instruction on consent, safe sex practices, and no standard regarding medically accurate sex education instruction. Without these foundations of knowledge, the value of human trafficking education would be significantly dampened or rendered ineffective.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) School Health Profiles (2019) reported which school health policies, practices, and health topics were taught in schools across the country. Highlights of the North Dakota report demonstrate insufficient sex education across our state to prepare students for participating in human trafficking curriculum:

- 15.1% of North Dakota secondary schools taught students all 20 critical sexual health education topics in a required course in any of grades 6, 7, or 8.
- 28.6% of North Dakota secondary schools taught students all 20 critical sexual health education topics in a required course in any of grades 9, 10, 11, or 12.
- 15.1% of North Dakota secondary schools taught students how to correctly use a condom in a required course in any of grades 6, 7, or 8.
- 28.6% of North Dakota secondary schools taught students how to correctly use a condom in a required course in any of grades 9, 10, 11, or 12.
- 57.5% of North Dakota secondary schools taught students how to access valid and reliable information, products, and services related to HIV, other STDs, and pregnancy in a required course in any of grades 6, 7, or 8.
- 74.2% of North Dakota secondary schools taught students how to access valid and reliable information, products, and services related to HIV, other STDs, and pregnancy in a required course in any of grades 9, 10, 11, or 12.

The issues and goals sought to be addressed by SB 2330 are too important not to provide the requisite base education for exploring the difficult and deep content required of the proposed mandatory curriculum. The ACLU of North Dakota urges the inclusion of age appropriate comprehensive sex education in Section 2 of the bill or a comprehensive sex education pre-requisite requirement for the proposed mandatory curriculum.

The ACLU of North Dakota requests the Senate Education Committee to give a “do not pass” recommendation on SB2330 in its current form if not amended to include a comprehensive sex education requirement.

Submitted by:
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