

Brittany Bollinger, DNP, APRN, FNP-BC, PMHNP-BC, Connect Us Therapy, Williston, ND. I am writing to encourage you to vote no on HB1430 regarding social work licensure. I make this recommendation for the following reasons:

- The legislature overruling social work code is government overreach.
- The bill refers to the dangerous practice of conversion therapy, a practice that all major medical and behavioral health organizations reject because of its harmful effects.
- Conversion therapy lead to increased suicides, is coercive, and does not achieve desired outcomes.
- Passing this bill would prevent North Dakota from participating in the Social Work Licensure Compact.

This bill would make the harmful practice of conversion therapy ethical for social workers in ND. When the ND Board of Social Work Examiners updated their administrative rules in 2021, they included language that explicitly stated that practicing conversion therapy has many negative effects, and is known to increase suicide attempts and completions to individuals who have been subjected to it.

This bill supersedes a rule that was already made by the governor's appointed board, the North Dakota Board of Social Work Examiners. It overrules a vote taken by the Administrative Rules Committee. It also ignores the multiple mental health and medical associates who renounce conversion therapy as dangerous and ineffective.

Additionally, passing this bill would prevent North Dakota from participating in the Social Work Licensure Compact. This would effectively remove a social worker's ability to more easily practice across state lines and obtain access to further mental health practitioners - providers that are desperately needed in the state. Please do not take away the ability for us to join 22 other states (Minnesota and South Dakota included) in this opportunity.

Please help reduce suicides in North Dakota by voting no on HB1430.