

**Testimony on HB 1430**  
**Senate Human Services Committee**  
**March 10, 2025**

Chairwoman Lee and Members of the Senate Human Services Committee:

The National Association of Social Workers – North Dakota Chapter (NASW-ND) opposes HB 1430, which would allow licensed clinical social workers to engage in conversion therapy under specific conditions. This bill raises concerns about the role of government in determining the ethical standards of a profession that should be guided by those with the proper education and training. Just as ethical standards in fields like real estate, nursing, agronomy, and others are set by professionals with expertise, social work should be no different. Government intervention in this area could undermine the years of education, research, and experience social workers bring to their practice. It is essential that social workers, like other professionals, maintain the ability to set their own ethical standards.

**Senator Lee** – As a former real estate broker, you know that ethical standards in your field are set by organizations like the North Dakota Real Estate Commission, not the government. Imposing new "ethical standards" could undermine the guidance of professionals who understand the field's nuances.

**Senator Weston** – In agriculture, ethical practices are set by experts in associations like the North Dakota Agricultural Association. It would be inappropriate for the government to impose standards without input from those who understand the challenges of farming and agronomy, as you do.

**Senator Clemens** – In your career in transportation, ethical practices are determined by organizations like the North Dakota Motor Carriers Association and federal regulations. Similarly, social workers should be allowed to establish their ethical guidelines.

**Senator Hogan** – With your extensive experience in social services, you understand the importance of allowing professionals to set their own ethical standards, as NASW does, based on years of practice and understanding of human behavior.

**Senator Roers** – In your respective nursing profession, ethical standards are set by organizations like the American Nurses Association, focusing on patient care, confidentiality, and respect for individuals. Similarly, social workers rely on their own professional guidelines to ensure compassionate, client-centered care.

**Senator Van Oosting** – Just as massage therapists adhere to standards set by the North Dakota American Massage Therapy Association, social workers follow guidelines that emphasize their clients' well-being, dignity, and respect, ensuring high-quality, ethical service.

In closing, HB 1430 interferes with the professional autonomy of social workers by suggesting that lawmakers should determine their ethical standards. Just as real estate, agronomy, transportation, nursing, and massage therapy professionals determine their own ethics, social work should be no different. We urge the committee to recommend a **Do Not Pass on HB 1430**, allowing social workers to continue determining their ethical practices based on their education, experience, and expertise.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Sydney Trotter, MSW, LBSW

NASW-ND Member