

Testimony on HB 1430  
11 March 2025  
Senate Human Services Committee

Chairwoman Lee and Members of the Senate Human Services Committee,

My name is Stella Cantu, and I am a social work student at Minot State University. As currently written, **I strongly oppose HB 1430 and urge a DO NOT pass.**

In 2021, the Administrative Rules Committee proposed changes to the ND Board of Social Work Examiners (NDBSWE) administrative code. These changes were passed with a majority vote i state that the practices and treatments of conversion therapy are an ethical violation for a licensed social worker.

1. **HB 1430, as it is currently written, is incorrect and misleading.** Sections 1 and 3 have conflicting definitions of what “conversion therapy” is. Section 1 defines “conversion therapy” as “any treatment with the goal of changing the sexual orientation or gender identity of an individual”. Section 3 merely substitutes “counsel” for “treatment” and “wants to align” for “goal of changing”. Section 3 contradicts Section 2 of HB 1430 because Section 3 simply provides the same, but differently worded, definition of “conversion therapy” as Section 1. To help alleviate this confusion, conversion therapy should be defined as it is in North Dakota’s Administrative Code, specifically Chapter 75.5-02-06.1.
2. As described in Section 4a, self-determination relates to the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics. While it is ethical for a social worker to provide resources and educational information regarding potential treatments, **self-determination does not** grant an individual the opportunity to receive treatment that are unethical. The language within HB 1430 is misleading for individuals who see licensed clinical social workers and can lead to misinterpretations regarding therapy.
3. **Conversion therapy has been proven to cause harm and is ineffective** in changing an individual's sexual orientation<sup>1</sup>. It has been removed from the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders since 1973. Now we stand, 52 years later, still debating whether or not members of the LGBTQ+ community are welcome within our societies. HB 1430 is based on personal beliefs rather than statistical data. Let trained and licensed social workers, not legislators, define the ethical guidelines for their practice.

This is not a bill to expand healthcare services; it clearly represents government overreach. Please consider the citizens of North Dakota, your neighbors, and your constituents and give HB 1430 a Do Not Pass recommendation.

Thank you,  
Stella Cantu

---

<sup>1</sup> [What does the scholarly research say about whether conversion therapy can alter sexual orientation without causing harm?](#)