

Dear Chairman Klemin, Vice Chairs Karls and Vetter, fellow committee members:

I write to express my strong opposition to HCR 3013, which seeks to define marriage as solely between one man and one woman. As someone who was born and raised in this state and plans to raise my children here, I am deeply concerned about the direction this legislation would take us. If this bill passes, I will be forced to reconsider whether this is the place I want to call home, as I refuse to raise my children in a state that legislates discrimination.

The reality is that people will love who they want to love, whether the law recognizes that love or not. Denying same-sex couples the right to marry does not change the existence of their relationships—it only strips them of the legal protections that marriage provides.

One of the most critical aspects of marriage is the legal ability to access medical insurance and benefits. Same-sex couples deserve the same rights and protections as heterosexual couples when it comes to ensuring their families are cared for. Preventing marriage equality does not prevent love—it prevents families from accessing essential rights like medical coverage, inheritance, and parental protections.

Furthermore, data consistently shows that same-sex marriages have some of the lowest rates of divorce and CPS intervention. This is largely because same-sex couples must undergo immense financial and legal hurdles to have children, whether through adoption, surrogacy, or other means. These families are often some of the most prepared, stable, and committed households, and yet, this bill seeks to deny them equal recognition.

The notion that marriage is strictly between one man and one woman is not grounded in science, religion, or history. Across cultures and time periods, marriage has taken many forms, often evolving to reflect society's growth and understanding of human relationships. This bill is an attempt to impose a narrow and exclusionary definition that does not reflect the diversity or lived experiences of the people in our state.

For these reasons, I urge you to issue a "Do Not Pass" recommendation on HCR 3013.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and service to our state.

Sincerely,

Sarah Goerts

Proud homeowner in Horace, North Dakota