

Dear Chair Klemin and members of the Judiciary Committee,

I strongly urge a “Do Not Pass” on HRC 3013.

I am a North Dakota transplant that moved here for school; I am a transgender army veteran and current senior Electrical Engineering student at UND that is enrolled in the accelerated Masters program. I am also the president of the oSTEM @ UND chapter, a student organization dedicated to promoting and uplifting LGBTQIA+ voices in STEM and increasing professional development opportunities and furthering interests in STEM fields for students.

I speak on behalf of myself, my friends, members of the community that will be directly impacted by this bill, and most importantly the children around me that look up to me as a leadership figure in a world that is so often hostile towards them just for living their own life that happens to fall outside of what society at large labels as “normal”.

The core of this bill is anti-American in its sentiment and morally reprehensible in every sense of the word. Going through in favor testimonies, every single one mentions a religious reasoning for overturning the right to same sex marriage, and all for just one particular religion. Christianity may be a major religion in the United States, but it is not the sole religion of the people of this country and to try and assert it as morally superior legally is in direct contrast to the American peoples first amendments rights to freedom of their religion.

Some may claim that due to there being no mention of the right to marriage within the Constitution, then the text of the tenth amendment of the constitution means that this should remain a state-by-state basis for deciding who can and can not marry, yet this presumes that marriage to some extent is a right people of this country hold, and using religious arguments to suppress this right is fallacious at best if not intentional bigotry disguised under “states rights”, as the phrase historically tends to be. Furthermore, the tenth amendments specific text is “The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people”. If one is to argue in favor of the federal government not having the power to control marriage, then one should then more accurately presume the right to be held by the people as opposed to the state’s legislative body.

Let it be mentioned that the equal protection clause of the 14<sup>th</sup> amendment clearly states “no state can deny equal protection of the law to any person within its jurisdiction”; if the right of people to be married is to be presumed, then **any** attempt to limit the union of legally consenting adults is in stark contrast to the spirit of the 14<sup>th</sup> amendment which was put in place due to states attempts to restrict freedoms of marginalized groups under the guise of “states rights”.

Respectfully,

Bailey Turner