

Dear Committee Members

I am writing in strong opposition to bill 3013, a concurrent resolution urging the United States Supreme Court to redefine marriage as a union exclusively between one man and one woman. This resolution is not only a step backward in the fight for equality, but it also disregards the fundamental principles of personal freedom, constitutional rights, and the separation of church and state.

First and foremost, marriage equality has been the law of the land since the Supreme Court's landmark ruling in *Obergefell v. Hodges* (2015). This decision affirmed that the right to marry is a fundamental liberty protected under the Constitution, ensuring that same-sex couples have the same legal rights and recognition as heterosexual couples. HCR 3013 seeks to undermine this ruling and strip away the rights of countless Americans, effectively relegating them to second-class citizenship based solely on whom they love.

Furthermore, this resolution ignores the substantial social, legal, and economic benefits of marriage equality. Denying marriage rights to same-sex couples does not strengthen traditional marriage; rather, it weakens the values of fairness, inclusion, and family stability. Studies have shown that legal recognition of same-sex marriage leads to better mental and physical well-being for LGBTQ+ individuals, strengthens families, and provides security for children being raised by same-sex parents. To advocate for the reversal of these protections is to deny dignity, stability, and equal treatment under the law to a significant portion of our population.

Religious freedom is a cherished right in our country, but it does not include the right to impose religious beliefs on others through law. Many religious institutions and faith traditions support and officiate same-sex marriages. Attempting to codify one particular religious perspective into law directly contradicts the First Amendment's protection against government establishment of religion.

In conclusion, HCR 3013 is a harmful and unnecessary resolution that seeks to erode fundamental rights and does nothing to serve the people of North Dakota. I urge you to reject this measure and instead focus on policies that promote fairness, equality, and the well-being of all citizens. Marriage equality is not just a legal matter—it is a matter of dignity, respect, and the fundamental right to love and be recognized equally under the law.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Joe Mongeon, Rolette, ND