

North Dakota House Concurrent Resolution 3013 (HCR 3013) has already done damage to our state's reputation by mere means of it being introduced, and I am firmly in opposition. The mere existence of HCR 3013 makes a clear statement to the LGBTQ community in North Dakota that they are not welcome. In a state where workforce and retention of our young people are problematic, this amplifies further alienation of people that we should be working to include. These individuals are our friends, neighbors, and colleagues who deserve dignified recognition of their relationships.

Many arguments for HCR 3013 are based around an incorrect perception that same sex couples are not able to raise healthy children. To the contrary, the ability of same-sex couples to raise healthy, well-adjusted children is supported by a growing body of research. According to a study by the American Psychological Association, "there is no scientific evidence that parenting effectiveness is related to parental sexual orientation." Studies have consistently shown that children raised by same-sex parents fare just as well as those raised by opposite-sex parents. Factors such as parental involvement, emotional support, and the quality of the parent-child relationship play far more critical roles in a child's development than the sexual orientation of the parents.

A significant percentage of arguments for HCR 3013 are linked to disagreement on religious principles. I would encourage those that feel their religious principles prohibit a same sex marriage to not enter into a same sex marriage themselves and leave judgement of morality to their god(s).

Marriage has implications far beyond child-rearing and religious significance. The ability to make health care decisions for a spouse for example, is implied through marriage.

I strongly suggest a do not pass recommendation for this bill.

Thank you,

William Brandt

Horace, District 27 Resident