

Hello members of the ND Legislature...

I am writing you to make sure that my voice and others in North Dakota with a similar conviction regarding HCR 3013.

Almost five years ago there was a debate in Minot about the raising of a Pride flag at our City Hall, there were many people who spoke at the first city council meeting. Almost every word spoken at that city council was filled with unfounded opinions, hate, and based on fears of unfounded rhetoric. After this first meeting recording circulated, I posted something on social media about my disappointment, to which my youngest daughter called me immediately to ask what had happened. By the end of that conversation, we had a plan for both her and me to attend the next council meeting to speak against what was witnessed by members of the community. Both of us spoke that evening and I couldn't have been prouder of my gay daughter who very thoughtfully addressed council and a group of people.

My daughter left her hometown to attend college at UMN and she could not wait to leave behind the narrow mindedness of many people in the town where she grew up. She also knew, not only Minot but the state of North Dakota, was a place she could never truly be accepted fully as her true self. This truth makes me very sad, but I understood all of those choices and hoped we had come further in the past 5 years or the past decade since the passing of Marriage Equality in the United States.

But then resolution NCR 3013 was introduced in our state legislature this session. I am writing in strong opposition to this resolution because this resolution brings nothing good to our state. While a resolution doesn't change the law in North Dakota or federally, it shows support to people in our nation and federal leaders that not ALL of our citizens are equal or welcome. Passing this resolution shows evidence that some of our leadership is ok with rights being lost, benefits to partners being removed, and people's marriages being dissolved legally if Obergefell v. Hodges was overturned.

Our state has always prided ourselves on being welcoming to strangers, kind, and respectful of others; this resolution says completely the opposite of that. Why would we want to signal to the entire country that we don't welcome a certain group of people? Why do we want to take away rights from our North Dakota residents?

While I understand many of our legislators talk about protecting the ND constitution as their reasoning for bringing forth this resolution and also approving it. Maybe the legislators should be looking to amend the ND Constitution Measure 1, defining marriage between a man and a woman. This wasn't even a resolution until 2004, and the Supreme Court ruling occurred in 2015. We have already waited a decade, now would be the best time to really listen to the constituents of our state and move forward with love and acceptance for EVERYONE in our state, and the country, giving them RIGHT to marry whomever they love.

Respectfully

Sabrina Herrman