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Chair Larson and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee: My name is Carter Gill, and I am submitting this testimony in opposition to HCR 3013.

As members of the *Judiciary* committee, it should be of no question that you all understand the structure of both the North Dakota and United States judicial system. This is not your decision as legislators to make, nor is it the will of the people of North Dakota that this decision be overturned. *Obergefell v. Hodges* has been the precedent for marriage equality in the United States since 2015. For almost a decade, this Supreme Court ruling has allowed for same-sex couples to have the same rights as heterosexual marriages. It is morally bankrupt and inhumane to ask the Supreme Court to strip these couples, many of whom live in North Dakota, of what they have been only recently afforded.

This bill is not popular in North Dakota. House Representatives who thought they would be able to give HCR 3013 a yes vote and not face their constituents for such a heartless vote against their neighbors and constituents have since voiced their regret for a yes vote. It is one thing to give this a yes vote; but to vote yes and then apologize to their constituents is somehow even worse. As legislators, it is your job and responsibility to reflect the will of your constituents and act in their best interests – not yours. Are there not bigger problems in North Dakota than gay and lesbian couples being happy in their marriages?

Those testifying in support will pontificate bible verses and quote “the natural order” in their opposition of gay marriage and *Obergefell*, but if we are to pick and choose bible verses to justify what can only be described as hate, how can that fulfill the teachings of Jesus Christ? Or is this hate founded on the weaponization of out-of-context scripture and the hateful rhetoric of politicians to justify hate towards a minority of people who just want to be left well enough alone by government?

All but one of you on this committee are part of the North Dakota Republican Party, whose platform supports individual liberty and limited government. Would this bill not increase the power of government to determine what is and is not marriage? Is this not an infringement on individual liberty? Or, is the very idea of being equal to a gay or lesbian

couple so horrifying to you that you think it necessary to abuse the power of government to target a minority in this state that you still represent?

These points considered, I urge you to follow your oath to North Dakotans and give this bill a DO NOT PASS recommendation.