



OPINION COLUMNS

Port: Republican lawmakers say they regret vote for anti-gay resolution

Republican lawmakers have indicated that they'd vote against the resolution if given another chance, though it's unlikely they'll get one.



State Rep. Scott Louser, a Republican from Minot, is pictured here in a video he posted on Facebook in which he expressed remorse for a vote against an anti-gay resolution in the North Dakota House of Representatives. Screen capture via Facebook



Opinion by Rob Port

February 26, 2025 at 5:04 PM

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Opinion

MINOT — On Monday, Feb. 24, the North Dakota House of Representatives approved a resolution calling on the U.S. Supreme Court striking down state bans on same-sex



It was an absurd waste of time given that the courts do not respond to these things. It's conceivable that the courts might take up a new case that could prompt them to overturn their own precedent, or that a new amendment to the Constitution could be ratified creating a right to same-sex marriage, but [House Concurrent Resolution 3013](https://ndlegis.gov/assembly/69-2025/regular/bill-overview/bo3013.html?search=3013), introduced by Republican Rep. Bill Tveit, has zero impact on either of those outcomes.

Still, it passed with 52 yes votes. A total of 48 yes votes were needed to approve it.

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Since that vote, multiple Republican House members have indicated that they voted the wrong way.

Rep. Jim Jonas, a Republican from West Fargo, indicated that he simply [made a mistake](https://www.inforum.com/news/north-dakota/rep-jim-jonas-says-he-did-not-intend-to-support-resolution-against-same-sex-marriage) and pushed the wrong button when he voted. Now Rep. Scott Louser, R-Minot, Rep. Brandy Pyle, R-Casselton, Rep. Matt Ruby, R-Minot, and Rep. Donald Longmuir, R-Stanley, have expressed regret for their votes.

"I've served eight sessions, and it's rare for a moment where you doubt yourself, but it happened to me this time," Louser said [in a video posted on Facebook](#).

<https://www.facebook.com/scottlouser/videos/1800545577434494/?>

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"This one I do wish I could have back," he added.

"I regret that this resolution was before us, and it really feels to me like it was only serving as a litmus test as to where people sit" on the issue of same-sex marriage, he continued.

"The Supreme Court has ruled on this. It's the law of the land," he said before urging voters to contact their state senators and urge a defeat of this resolution in the Senate chamber.

I spoke to Louser, who told me that, even though he voted for the resolution, he was impressed by [an impassioned speech delivered by Rep. Austin Foss](#).

(<https://www.inforum.com/opinion/columns/port-the-campaign-to-make-north-dakota-a-bitter-unwelcoming-place>) He said he spoke to Foss about his speech afterward, and spent a lot of time thinking about the vote in the hours since he cast it. "It really started to sink in," he said.

State Rep. Austin Foss addresses same sex...

State Rep. Austin Foss addresses same sex marriage resolution

[Pyle described a similar situation.](#)

(<https://www.facebook.com/brandpyleNDhouseD22/posts/pfbido>)

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"I want to take a moment to address something important regarding my vote on Resolution 3013," Pyle wrote in a Facebook post. "When I cast my vote, I had planned to vote 'No,' but as the debates unfolded, I got caught up in the idea that passing it would help move us towards a future where marriage licenses are no longer required and everyone transitions to civil union licenses."



Rep. Brandy Pyle Contributed photo

"The concept is simple: marriage is between you and God, while civil unions are a matter for the government. But after reflecting on

the vote, I realize that making such a significant policy change at the federal level isn't likely to happen anytime soon, and I should have stuck to my initial decision," she continued. "I understand that my vote has sent the wrong message, and for that, I am truly sorry. I regret that this resolution passed, and I know it hurt those who were hoping for a different outcome. I take full responsibility for my vote, and I'll continue to work toward a more thoughtful, inclusive approach in the future."

In his own Facebook post,

([https://www.facebook.com/LongmuirforHouse/posts/pfbidoYz1tcio4XtAeur9ZgTQkCJHoQeEhgs296HZJ6kpnqQALSEhjamHWuiS4uLdLsogBl?__cft__\[o\]=AZXMRJCESsnqkAzl-RnRge1HFMC5pLdeXM4c4HqviPsFWgVk6D9pPZb3HraqVpis_Mij51_d2O7PvkixYOI6BQlbMuDFuG_abwIIXEqvAJ9lwF3Q5eobwWZQbbkoNaMX_uTR4dZlaZTNkBFkwW2DrA9-D-RFpcekpdaquRBF_ReIug&__tn__=%2CO%2CP-R](https://www.facebook.com/LongmuirforHouse/posts/pfbidoYz1tcio4XtAeur9ZgTQkCJHoQeEhgs296HZJ6kpnqQALSEhjamHWuiS4uLdLsogBl?__cft__[o]=AZXMRJCESsnqkAzl-RnRge1HFMC5pLdeXM4c4HqviPsFWgVk6D9pPZb3HraqVpis_Mij51_d2O7PvkixYOI6BQlbMuDFuG_abwIIXEqvAJ9lwF3Q5eobwWZQbbkoNaMX_uTR4dZlaZTNkBFkwW2DrA9-D-RFpcekpdaquRBF_ReIug&__tn__=%2CO%2CP-R)) Longmuir

asked for forgiveness for his vote. "I need to acknowledge a mistake I made in voting in favor of HCR3013," he wrote. "HCR3013 is a bill that creates division rather than unity. As Connie and I drove to Stanley today, we discussed this and I was wrong in voting in favor of HCR3013."

"I ask for your forgiveness," he continued, "and promise to do better."

Ruby expressed his regret in a comment to a Facebook post about the resolution. "I voted wrong," he wrote. "I'm going to testify against this when it gets to the senate."

Could the vote be called back to the House floor for reconsideration?

Louser says that's unlikely. "There's two ways," he told me. "My understanding is that (Rep.) Jeff Hoverson was not on record voting. He, because he was not there, could request a vote. Because

it's been more than one day, it would take two-thirds of the chamber to pull it back. It would take a majority to reconsider after one day."

It's unlikely that Hoverson, another Minot Republican who has expressed support for the resolution, and is one of the most socially conservative lawmakers serving in Bismarck, would be willing to call the vote to the floor again.

"Probably, the best route for those that want that to fail is to have it fail in the Senate," Louser said.

There are two takeaways from this turn of events, I think.

First is the importance of making things personal. [On the Plain Talk podcast Wednesday, \(https://www.inforum.com/opinion/columns/plain-talk-introducing-dozens-of-bills-is-poor-legislation-says-lawmaker\)](https://www.inforum.com/opinion/columns/plain-talk-introducing-dozens-of-bills-is-poor-legislation-says-lawmaker) I was talking about how Foss' speech probably made this issue less abstract and more personal for the lawmakers in the House chamber. It's one thing to make a decision about the LGBTQ community in the aggregate. It's another to look a colleague in the eye and tell them you don't believe they should have the same latitude to pursue happiness as heterosexual people do.

Second, it's important to give people you disagree with some space to change their minds. In politics, we have a tendency to treat people who change tack on an issue as though they are hypocrites. We call them "flip-floppers" and worse.

I've been as guilty of this as anyone.

But sometimes people really do change their minds, and sometimes that change in course is authentic.

Democracy, distilled down to its essence, is really just about persuading other people to change their minds and agree with you on a given issue or candidate. We should be happy when it happens.

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CONVERSATION

