

10 March 2023

Dear Chair Larson, and the members of the Judiciary Committee,

I am writing to you in regards to HCR 3013. This resolution is a direct violation of our First Amendment rights. The separation of church and state is very clear. This is also a direct attack on the LGBTQ+ community.

America is founded on varying beliefs, skin colors, sexual orientations, and religions. North Dakota would do well to remember that. We, as citizens of the United States of America and residents of North Dakota are allowed to practice any religion, to include none at all. Any bill or resolution that includes, "God's law" is blatantly unconstitutional.

If members of the LGBTQ+ community are excluded from these rights, then this is no longer a free county. This resolution would create basically second-class citizens who do not have the same rights because of their sexual orientation. This is unacceptable.

Many of the members of the legislature were around when it was illegal for a Black person to marry a white person, this was as recent as the 1960s. Interracial marriage was legalized in the US on 12 June 1967.

Marriage discrimination is the exact same thing that this legislature is trying to pass into law, but in the year 2025. Why would the government allow discrimination based on sexual orientation? Ask yourselves this, is discrimination acceptable? If yes, why? Where would the stripping of rights end? This is a step towards stripping rights away from people the North Dakota legislature do not agree with.

Defining marriage between a "biological man and biological woman" is, in my opinion, asinine. Who is going to check if someone is a "biological male or female"? If marriage is for producing children, is the next step to nullify marriages of people who don't want or can't have children? Are you going to make sure everyone who is getting married is religious?

Why are we wasting time and money on defining what is, truly at its core, a legal contract? This is unacceptable coming from government. North Dakota has voted for less government interference, but now the government wants to decide who can and cannot get married?

I enlisted in the North Dakota National Guard to uphold our constitution. I am absolutely disgusted with the legislature for even entertaining a resolution to strip rights away from a group of people because they exist. We, as a state, need to do better by our citizens. If one group of people doesn't have rights, then none of us have rights.

I urge you to do something better with your time that we, as taxpayers, fund and do not entertain this resolution any further.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and service to the State of North Dakota,

Sincerely,

Jess Earle

Carrington, ND