

Chairwoman Larson, members of the Judiciary Committee, and members of the Senate, I know how seriously you take and accept the roles and responsibilities of being elected to serve in our state's legislature. I was honored to serve in the North Dakota Senate beside and among many of you not too long ago where the very first responsibility we accepted was an oath to support the United States and North Dakota Constitutions.

Section 1, Article I of the North Dakota Constitution states that "all individuals are by nature equally free and independent and have certain inalienable rights, among which are those of enjoying and defending life and liberty... and pursuing and obtaining safety and happiness..."

Section 3, Article I states that "the free exercise and enjoyment of religious profession and worship, without discrimination or preference shall be forever guaranteed in this state..."

Our Constitution makes clear that all North Dakotans have the right to enjoy life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. If two consenting, North Dakota adults of the same sex view marriage as a way to obtain that, I see no compelling reason for you to deny them of that or to discriminate against them any more than you would to deny or discriminate against two consenting, North Dakota adults of the opposite sex.

Admittedly, I support marriage equality for a whole host of other reasons, including and most personally because of the many wonderful, caring, community-minded and family-loving individuals within the queer community who I know, love, and cherish as friends. None of those reasons are more core and fundamental than my belief that every single person in my state and in our country is deserving of equal rights and opportunities and that no one person is greater than or lesser than, above or below, any other.

I encourage you to oppose HCR 3013 if for no reason other than the oath you took when you were sworn into office as an elected official.

Thank you, very sincerely, for your service.

Respectfully,



Erin Oban, Bismarck
District 35 Resident