

Dear Chair Klemin and members of the Judiciary Committee,

I strongly urge a “Do Not Pass” on HRC 3013.

I am someone who has lived here for 16 years, was moved here as a child, and is a current student at University of North Dakota in their Junior year at the English Program here with minor in Women and Gender Studies. I am also the co-president of The Queer Trans Alliance student organization whose main goal is to give support, education, and promote advocacy for the LGBTQ+ community in the Greater Grand Forks area and UND’s campus itself.

I speak on behalf of myself, my partners, my friends, and members of the community this resolution directly impacts, but most importantly the people in my organization and community that look up to me as a leadership figure in such an unforgiving and hate-filled world to them for just having a societally viewed non-normative identity for support and for how to process what this legislation is doing against them.

The basis of this resolution is completely the opposite of what the United States stands for as a country. Going through the responses that were in favor of this resolution, we see a common pattern of people stating that this is for religious reasons that this should pass ranging from the wellbeing of children to it being a covenant between man and women. This is all being from only one single branch of religion the magnificent country has to offer, Christianity. Christianity may be the major religion that is practiced but these responses do not bring into thought what other religions might think on the topic which in of itself violates the First Amendment since the argument here favors one religion over another.

But if you want to use Christianity as a basis for this argument, from someone who was raised in the religion but does not practice anymore for what you guys have shown it to be, it holds no water in this argument.

To quote Matthew 5:43-47 (NIV):

“You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbour and hate your enemy.’ But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends

rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? And if you only greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that?"

In doing this resolution, where is the love for what you deem to be your enemy? What reward is this going to bring for you? What are you doing that is more for others? None. None at all. There isn't a speck of love for the LGBTQ+ community in this resolution. It is the exact opposite of it. It is hate filled and a bad representation of your own religion and God. To bring to light to this board that wants to bring God, remember what the son of God, Jesus said.

To quote Matthew 7:1-2 (NIV)

"Do not judge or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."

Your own religious text states specifically that you are not in the place to judge. More specifically, you shouldn't judge unless you want to be judged too. Love itself cannot thrive in judgement of said actions. You cannot love an enemy, then turn your back and judge them, passing resolutions like this nor bills that restrict their own freedoms they have a right to. In the end, if you think they must be judged for it, leave it to your God.

Another point that kept coming up is that marriage as an institution is to be between biological females and males. If you took biology past high school, you would know it is more complicated than that. There are *over 30 known types of intersex variations*, which affect people differently depending on what condition they have and we are finding more and more each day. There are chromosomal variations such as Klinefelter syndrome (47, XXY), X0/XY mosaicism, Jacobs Syndrome (XXY), 46, XX/46, XY, de la Chapelle syndrome (46, XX testicular difference of sex development), and so many more cause genetic variations that can cause different presentation. There are hormonal variations such as Late Onset Congenital Adrenal Hyperplasia, Congenital Adrenal Hyperplasia, Androgen Insensitivity Syndrome, Androgen Deficiency, Gonadotropin-Releasing Hormone Insensitivity, and many more where they can 'genetically' have an XX or XY but their bodies themselves present differently than that. There are anatomical variations such as Aphallia (Or Penile Agenesis), Polyorchidism, Testicular Dysgenesis Syndrome, Persistent Müllerian Duct Syndrome, Anorchia (Or Gonadal Agenesis), Vaginal Atresia, and so many more that bring the body to show differently than what is societally 'a man' or 'a women'. With this resolution, you would be leaving out this group of people who medically are not what this congression would consider to be biologically a male or female. This in of itself is discrimination towards this group of people and is against this state's constitution and this wonderful country's federal constitution.

Let it be said that the equal protection clause of the 14th amendment does state that “no state can deny equal protection of the law to any person within its jurisdiction”. If marriage is an institution that is a right to the people of this state and this country, then any attempt to limit it between consenting adults is in direct opposition to this.

Once more strongly urge a “Do Not Pass” on HRC 3013.

Thank you for your service to the community and to your constituents.

Meghan Byrd

Co-President of Queer Trans Alliance