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Senate Judiciary  
North Dakota Legislative Assembly  
600 E Boulevard Ave  
Bismarck, ND 58505

Dear Members of the House Human Services Committee:

I am writing this letter in opposition to HCR 3013. I believe that all individuals have a right to live with respect and dignity, regardless of any personal beliefs that I or others hold. This includes the ability to marry and raise a family. Churches and their members can have their own beliefs about marriage, but the government of ND should not decide what that looks like. The Constitution outlines a clear division between church and state and should be upheld. I believe HCR 3013 is a violation of this and, more importantly, does not indicate how the majority of North Dakotans feel.

Furthermore, this would harm same sex couples who are already married. There are individuals who feel they must adopt their own children now because they are fearing that the right to marry will be removed and they will no longer have legal claim of their own children. This will only hurt families. Passing this bill will also remove healthcare and other benefits from these families. Regardless of your personal religious beliefs, this is not right. If you don't want to marry same sex individuals in your church fine, but the state of ND should represent the rights of all North Dakotans, not a few congregation members of a church. A 2022 Public Religion Research Institute (PRRI) opinion poll found that 66% of North Dakota residents supported same-sex marriage, while 34% opposed it and 1% were unsure. This indicates that the majority of ND residents are in support of same sex marriage and would therefore recommend a DO NOT PASS.

The Movement Advancement Project reports that 20,000 individuals in ND are LGBTQ—are we willing to lose 20,000 North Dakotans to other states because they can't get married if they want to. The same research project indicates that 12,000 of those individuals are members of our workforce. Can we afford to lose 12,000 workers? We already can't find enough staff in most jobs.

Finally, you don't have to agree with someone's way of life, but every human does deserve equal rights. As legislators, you should be standing by the Constitution and equal rights are for every man, woman and child. [Same-sex marriage](#) has been legal in North Dakota since the U.S. Supreme Court decision in [Obergefell v. Hodges](#) on June 26, 2015, which found the denial of marriage rights to same-sex couples **unconstitutional**. Please recommend a DO NOT PASS for this piece of legislation.

Tamara Waters-Wheeler

Resources:

[https://www.lgbtmap.org/equality-maps/profile\\_state/ND](https://www.lgbtmap.org/equality-maps/profile_state/ND)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Public\\_Religion\\_Research\\_Institute](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Public_Religion_Research_Institute)