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Testimony in OPPOSITION to HCR 3013

Peg Haug

805 W Ave C

Bismarck, ND 58501

peghaug@hotmail.com

Chairman Larson and distinguished members of the Senate Judiciary Committee, my name is Peg Haug and I am testifying in OPPOSITION to House Concurrent Resolution 3013.

The definition of marriage is a very personal issue to each couple who is married or contemplating marriage. I do not want each state to have its own definition of marriage causing confusion for couples when moving or working across state lines. If a couple living in Moorhead is married, that marriage should be recognized in Fargo if that is where they work. North Dakota is trying to recruit workers, but if we don't recognize a marriage from another state, we lose out on talent that could contribute to our economy.

My suggestion for the definition of marriage is the legal union between two (2) consenting adults.

In reality, marriage is difficult to define.

Marriage is:

a commitment to be faithful to your partner;

being there to celebrate the good times and joys of life as well as to share or even shoulder the entire burden of the difficulties in life;

laughter and smiles as well as tears and frowns;

supporting your partner through the good times and bad times, in richness and less fortune, sickness and health;

understanding and compassion;

belief in your partner and in yourself;

togetherness and loneliness;

selflessness;

and so much more!

A Representative recently made the comments that "two cannot conceive or birth a child except for coming together of a female and a male" and "the country would not be able to perpetuate itself without men and women having children." When he said this, I of course thought of the LGBTQ+ community, but of other couples also: a young couple a few years into marriage who find out they are infertile; and the elderly who, after being married for most of their adult life, find themselves a widow or widower with a second chance at love. He basically said they shouldn't marry; they don't count because they can't have children. I don't think we have a problem in this country procreating. Just look at Elon Musk or Nick Cannon. They are doing their share and the share of others perpetuating the population. And most of it is outside of marriage.

Marriage is not just a religious sacrament. You don't only sign a marriage certificate for your church, you sign a legal document, a license, from the Clerk of Court which brings with it civil privileges and obligations.

When I come to the end of my life, and I'm lying on my death bed, I want to feel the hands of my partner holding my hands; I want to see their face and smile and know I made a difference in their life and they made a difference in mine; and I want to see the look in their eyes that says I love you and am loved by you.

Those things shared with my partner will bring me comfort and peace as I leave this world. I can take those things with me in my heart and in my spirit.

It doesn't matter if that partner is male or female. It just matters that we were partners who loved each other and were there for each other until one of us was there no longer.