

Dear Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee:

I am writing to voice my opposition to HCR 3013. I am a transplant from the state of Idaho and have been a resident of North Dakota for over ten years now. I own a business in West Fargo, ND that has been around for ten years, a mother to two boys, and a bonus mom to another boy and two girls. I received my bachelor's degree in business administration from North Dakota State University in 2021. My significant other is currently serving in the Air National Guard and has also served in the US Coast Guard before that.

In passing HCR 3013, it would signify a step backwards in the progress that we have made in providing fair and equal opportunities to everyone that is a resident of our state. As a small business owner, it is my duty and responsibility to provide fair and equal opportunities to anyone that I may employ. In the ten years as an employer, I have had people work for me that are heterosexual, gay, non-binary, and queer. I will strongly say that their sexual orientation has no bearing on my opinion about who they are as human beings, nor has affected their personal ability to do great work.

Each person that is part of the LGBTQ community deserves the same opportunities as heterosexual people. Denying them the option to marry the person they love is unfair. Deciding the rights of other humans should not be based on a verse or verses in the bible and should not be based on a religious opinion. Church and state are separate and should remain that way. Religious bias has no place in politics and each bill that you have the responsibility of voting for should only have consideration for the benefit of the most amount of people it affects, not your personal religious beliefs. If you personally believe that people of the same sexual orientation should not get married, then make that decision for yourself and do not restrict other people from making that decision for themselves. It will not affect your ability to live your life, but it will affect someone else if you vote to take that away. Love is love. Live and let live.

I urge you to vote "nay" so that we can continue progressing as a community that gives everyone equal and fair opportunities. I want to be proud of the representatives that we vote for in North Dakota.

Thank you for your time,

Danell Phelps

West Fargo, ND