

TESTIMONY OF PENNY ANDRIST IN OPPOSITION TO HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 3013

Members of the 69th Legislative Assembly,

My name is Penny Andrist and I offer this testimony in opposition to House Concurrent Resolution 3013. I was born and raised in ND – a state I have lived, worked and volunteered in for my entire life. I have been an educator, business owner, entertainer and Coordinator of Children’s Ministry at First Presbyterian Church in Fargo, ND.

My entire life’s work has been to nurture children and adults; to encourage them to be the best possible versions of themselves that they can be. I’m hoping today that I can also encourage you to be the best you can be.

I believe that the goal of major systems like government, education and religion should be to see ALL people flourish. It should be the first thought in your mind before you push your voting button. **“Will this harm anyone?”**

This resolution has no legal implication. It only stands to be mean-spirited and hurtful. It’s a terrible message to send to people that they are not as worthy. And yet, these same people in the LGBTQ community are and have been living here. They have been working, paying taxes, voting, volunteering, raising families, going to church and helping their neighbors. I suggest an alternative message to the intolerant one this resolution sends: *“Thank you.”* Perhaps gratitude for sticking it out in a state that has not been that friendly to these people, yet they contribute generously to society – perhaps that is what you could express in your rejection of HCR 3013.

I am a member of the LGBTQ community. I married my wife shortly after the Supreme Court handed down *Obergefell*. Our wedding was attended by Democrats and Republicans, including my father, John Andrist, who was a well-respected Senator in ND for two decades. There was an overwhelming sense of joy in the room. Just as I believe there is overwhelming support by the citizens of ND for this community. If you don’t recognize that, perhaps you don’t really have your finger on the pulse of your constituents.

Our marriage threatens no one. It does not impinge on others’ beliefs. I want nothing more than what you have. But I don’t want less. Please respect the rights of all people and REJECT HCR 3013.

Penny Andrist
West Fargo, ND