

Dear Senate Members,

North Dakotans have long celebrated their state's deserved reputation for being a safe and nurturing place to raise a family. At present, under the protection of federal law, the prospect of parenting is a reality for all our LGBTQ+ relatives, friends, and neighbors living in the Peace Garden State. By taking action to encourage the dismantling of the Obergefell v. Hodges decision, North Dakota will discourage married same-sex couples from raising children here. Because of this, among other reasons, I stand in opposition to HCR 3013. I'm certain that many among the Senate can recall fond memories of their mother's and father's expressing their love and support to them throughout their formative years. North Dakota's youth, especially those in dire need of a welcoming adoptive family, deserve the same. We would be irresponsible to limit the possibility of offering such an opportunity to our kids.

According to an April 9th article published by kfyrtv.com last year, there are close to 1,300 children in the North Dakota foster system. This number aligns with the metric adoptuskids.org reports as of today, March 12, 2025. The national foster care advocacy group states there are 1,250 kids in the ND foster care system with 385 waiting to be adopted. Knowing any child is growing up without the love and support of consistent parental care should inspire our Senators to seek out all possible avenues to ensure that every young North Dakotan can experience the essential function of a family. Nationally, according to data provided by UCLA's Williams Institute, same-sex households adopt at a rate of 21%. This is a stark comparison to their different-sex counterparts, with only 3% pursuing this socially crucial parenting option. The value our married gay, lesbian, and queer couples bring to our nation's adopted youth is immense.

Considering the data mentioned above, if our state's 671 married same-sex couples (according to the 2020 U.S. census) adopted at the national rate, 140 of the 385 children waiting for adoption would be welcomed into loving North Dakotan homes. This amounts to over a third of kids in need of a family. Approving the House's concurrent resolution 3013 will strike down any possibility of meeting this positively life altering potential. If anything, the legislative body should be encouraging same-sex couples to adopt and supporting those who already have.

Thank you for reading and considering my testimony. On a personal note, I am the son of an adoptive father who I credit as a major contributor to my success as an adult today. Additionally, I'm blessed to call many same-sex married couples my friends, and have all the confidence in the world that they would be, and in some cases are already, incredible parents to their adopted children.

Sincerely,

Anthony Rohr

Resident of Fargo