

<< TESTIMONY ON HB 1243 >>

Rev. Carel Two-Eagle, PK, PB,
Church of the Helping Hand, Inc.

A non-denominational non-sectarian Church where we worship by helping others

Good morning Chairman Weisz and members of the House Human Services Committee. For the record, my name is Reverend Carel Two-Eagle. I am the Presiding Bishop of the Church of the Helping Hand, Inc; and have been since the preceding Bishop passed on on January 11, 1993. I am also a Keeper of a Holy Pipe, which is central to our Traditional spiritual Ways.

I want to testify on HB 1243 for the purpose of clarifying the intent of the bill. If this bill *requires* clergy to have the training outlined in HB1243, *and* all churches to provide such materials, it violates both the doctrine of Separation of Church and State and the First Amendment section on freedom of religion. However well-meaning HB1243 may be, it is known that the road to Hell is paved with good intentions. The experiences of us Indigenous over the past 500+ years proves that.

If it does not require clergy to have whatever training is outlined in HB 1243, it does not violate the First Amendment, but it still appears to violate the doctrine of Separation of Church and State, therefore I am wary of this kind of legislation.

Traditional Lakota and other Indigenous spiritual Ways take a much different approach to matters including mental health and addiction than the majority culture or its churches do.

We had no addiction problems prior to the coming of Europeans to our Turtle Island. We have always had very effective ways in our various cultures' Traditions for dealing with mental health problems.

I would take a very stubborn stance against our Church being required to provide – or even to develop – materials on these subjects that might violate our Traditional taboos and requirements. My stance against any requirement that we use majority culture materials to deal with these would be even more stubborn. I am from the Standing Rock Nation. In my language, Inyan Woslata (EE-yanh-wo-SLAH-tah). It means, “stubborn as a rock”. This is my 13th consecutive Session and my 23rd Consecutive year at the Legislature. I have dealt with and/or repelled racist and anti-Traditional attacks for most of that time. Anyone who knows me knows I am either the immovable object or the

irresistible force, and it has been said I can change from one to the other and no one would notice. I have been a successful Native Spiritual Rights activist since childhood.

That being so, I trust that if this bill in any way can violate either the First Amendment or the doctrine of Separation of Church and State, you will give it a unanimous Do NOT Pass recommendation, and save the state money and time it will waste defending itself against a lawsuit it cannot win.

Thank you for hearing it in a good way now. I am always available to answer any questions.