

HB2181

Submitted by : Rena Rustad, District 4

Greetings committee members and thank you for reading my testimony on this very important bill.

One of the many things I have learned during the past year it is exactly how important it is to be IN church and WITH my church family. I completely support HB 2181. The fact that we even have to have a bill to protect our given rights to assemble and come together for worship is a sign of where our country is falling into. What was once taken for granted because of the Bill of Rights now comes under fire.

Because of government recommendations and warnings of massive death, I am one of the members of the "deer stand" outdoor church in Ryder, ND. (remember, even the governor recognized it during one of the press conferences) Right away our doors were shut and church was held outside. We became the "hay trailer" outdoor church last spring. As fall drew into winter, our pastor had to have some sort of shelter and now relays the message from a portable deer stand. But it's not church to me. It's some songs, a few bible passages and a very short sermon followed by some more songs while we all sit in our vehicles. Our 'old church' was a wonderful 1-1.5 hours long with lots of praise and worship and interaction of attendees. The pastor's family stands BY the church now and waves as people exit the parking lot. This is not church. It's a fantastic attempt at trying to keep things going but it's not church.

We are commanded to gather with other believers as stated in the bible. We are commanded to put God first. In this year, 2021 of the cancel culture of religious believers, don't follow the wrong path, stay on the lighted path and vote YES on 2181. Preserve our right to assemble and gather to worship as it is intended in the Bill of Rights.