

Testimony by Kara Geiger in opposition to HB 1323

Dear Chairman Dockter and members of the House Political Subdivisions Committee,

As a parent of a child in the public school system in North Dakota, I urge you to **OPPOSE HB 1323**.

The mask requirement by the Mandan Public School District is the primary reason that our children have been able to attend school in-person and without major interruptions during the pandemic. If only some of the students and staff were to choose to wear masks, we would be dealing with multiple instances of quarantining due to close contact with someone who tested positive. That is not only bad for our kids, but it's a burden for the parents and guardians who work outside the home and who may not be able to stay home with their children for 10 or 14 days, several times during the school year.

Masks are not 100% effective in preventing the transmission of COVID-19 (or other viruses, for that matter), but along with other mitigation measures, they provide an important layer of protection for everyone. If we wish to continue in-person instruction during this pandemic (and any future outbreaks), we need to allow the school districts to require masks when necessary. I have listened to the discussions during school board meetings and the decision to require masks was based on sound reasoning and was made with a great deal of care and consideration. No one wants our kids to have to wear masks in schools, but it's a minor and temporary inconvenience that allows for uninterrupted in-person instruction – which is something that everyone wants.

Thank you so much for your time and your service to North Dakota.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kara J. Geiger". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kara Geiger
Mandan, ND