

Chairman Davison, Vice Chairman Meyer, and members of the Government and Veterans Affairs Committee,

My name is Maura Ferguson and I live in District 18. I am writing this from a personal perspective and not on behalf of either of my employers. I am writing to urge you to issue a “Do Pass” on SB 2305 to establish a Truth, Healing, and Reconciliation Commission within the state of North Dakota.

Indigenous People in North Dakota have been victims of terrible acts against humanity including having their children ripped away from their families of origin and sent to boarding schools – something that has lasting impact on ND Indigenous families to this very day. As a social worker, I know that Native American children are disproportionately represented within North Dakota’s foster care system. As a social worker and a mother I can also state with certainty that there is no hope of true healing without honest, deliberate recognition of the trauma that victims endured. North Dakota’s Indigenous people did not deserve the way they were treated, and North Dakota should do all within its power to learn about the trauma endured, rectify this to the best of their ability, and mitigate future trauma.

The Canadian government established their Truth and Reconciliation Commission roughly 14 years ago to educate and foster healing. It’s well beyond time for North Dakota to do the same. Please issue a “do pass” for SB 2305.