



2800 Main Avenue – Fargo, ND 58013

Kim Pladson, Executive Director 701-551-5001 – kim@tntkidsfitness.org

March 15, 2021

Dear Honorable(s):

As a non-profit leader, member of a USA National Governed program in Fargo, I am writing to voice my strong opposition to the House HB 1298. The HB 1298 established to which relates to transgender athlete participation in sporting events has a greater and larger residual impact on our local businesses, venues, and youth sports.

As a member of a National USA program, our organization relies on hosting sporting events as part of the revenue needed to sustain our USA gymnastics program, the ability to allow athletes an opportunity to participate in a national program, and recruit professional coaching talent to our state. In the way the HB 1298 is currently written, any National affiliated sport that has a transgender policy could potentially dissolve in our state leaving 1000's of athletes no opportunity to participate in a sport they have spent years developing their skill and passion for.

USA Gymnastics, like many national governing bodies, have a transgender participation policy that as a member, we inherently have to adopt. We cannot 'opt' out.

- a) If HB 1298 is passed, clubs would not be able to 'rent' a public (school) or a park district facility.
- b) If HB 1298 is passed, ND law prohibits our organizations the ability to submit a bid to host local meet, state, regional, or national competitions in our state. We would not even have the ability to host a meet in our own facility.
- c) If HB 1298 is passed, each athlete is required to compete in their state to qualify to a Regional level, then qualify to a National level. That could not happen due to the fact our sport's governing body has a transgender participation policy and we cannot host a meet.
- d) If HB 1298 is passed, an ND athlete associated with any national association with a transgender policy, would not have the ability to compete in a Regional or National competition. This presence and status opens the doors for ND club athletes to be recruited for collegiate level scholarships.

I strongly oppose the current HB 1298 as written, and any proposed amendments to the HB 1298.

Any amendment to the HB 1298, would continue to have a detrimental effect on our local economy and athletes.

- a) Our ability to rent or 'afford' public venues. We would no longer be able to receive a non-profit rate as it would be considered a sponsorship.
- b) With a state law prohibiting transgender participation, it may be difficult to attract sporting events to North Dakota as a whole not just our sport.

- Many donations we request for our events come from hotel, restaurants, shopping, businesses that are profiting from events. This could cease.
 - Also note: These particular business entities do not receive public dollars so they wouldn't necessarily be directly prohibited from sponsoring/donating to local events; however, if their revenues are down because sporting events are much smaller or not happening at all, they may not have the extra dollars to support as they have done in the past.
- c) Renting a venue at a 'full market' rate put non-profits at risk by not having the ability to earn a profit to host the event itself.
- d) TNT has hosted (1) Regional tournament in Fargo. The economic impact to our community has been approximately \$295,000 hosting over 650 athletes. Our annual local tournaments hosted by TNT approximately \$60,000-\$80,000 for over 400 athletes locally and within a 200-mile radius.
- Our organization rely on hosting annual meets to support the USA program and its athletes. The HB 1298 does not allow us the ability to submit bids to bring large tournaments or local meets to our community.

National governed bodies impact 1,000's of ND athletes and organizations. Through sports we can influence our understanding of socio-economic issues, teach, develop, and express moral virtues and vices to demonstrate the importance of such values to overcome differences and encourages discussion, and thereby helps to break down prejudice, stereotypes, cultural differences, ignorance, intolerance and discrimination.

Once again I encourage you to oppose the HB 1298 due to its unforeseen larger economic impact. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or if I may be of assistance in any way.

Sincerely,
 Kim Pladson
 TNT Kid's Fitness Executive Director