



Senate Judiciary Committee –

The Tourism Alliance of Fargo Moorhead represents 68 tourism related businesses in the hotel, restaurant, and attractions businesses, plus a number of companies that service our industry. As an alliance, we are deeply concerned about the implications that HB1298 will have on our industry – specifically in regards to youth and collegiate sports in the state of ND.

The Fargo Moorhead Convention and Visitors Bureau and its legal team asserts that the current language of HB1298 would prevent the CVB, a publicly funded organization, from providing any sort of financial assistance to youth tournaments that allow persons born of one sex to play on a team designated for persons of the opposite sex. Whether this is applicable to a transgendered youth, or simply a girl wanting to play on the boys' team, this bill is unnecessarily discriminatory and burdened by a tremendous amount of red tape that youth sports organizations will have to navigate.

It should be noted that USA Wrestling likely cannot be held in North Dakota if this bill is passed, and USA Swimming will effectively cease to exist under this bill. Governing bodies such as these have policies in place to navigate the topic, and suggesting that the ND legislature knows more about what is appropriate for youth sports than their governing bodies is inappropriate and misguided. Furthermore, the North Dakota High School Athletic Association has policies in place addressing transgendered youth, and asserts that policy has not once been activated. Our elected officials are literally solving a problem that does not exist, and potentially creating a plethora of economic fallout in its wake. Lastly, we should be watching closely what is happening with our neighbors to the south, and the pushback they are seeing from NCAA athlete in response to their attempt to pass a similar bill.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the importance of youth sports tournaments in our community has been made abundantly clear, and support from agencies such as CVBs and Parks Board are critical towards making sure these events happen throughout our state. COVID aside, hotels and restaurants simply cannot afford to lose such a significant piece of our revenues, and in 2021 and 2022 as other forms of tourism are slow to rebound, youth sports are more important now than ever.

Our board of directors, on behalf of our membership base, appreciates your consideration of these concerns, and look forward to seeing our legislative bodies do what is ultimately right for North Dakota businesses and citizens.

Sincerely,

Tourism Alliance Fargo Moorhead
Board of Directors