

Greetings Chairwoman Larson and Members of the Committee,

My name is Amanda Strauss and I urge the Committee to vote NO on HB 1298.

I am a proud and active member of the indigenous community. We honor all people and celebrate many genders throughout our tribal communities for their roles and responsibilities. There are 5 tribes in North Dakota and many other native families who have moved here. This bill does not speak for North Dakota.

Our youth already struggle with isolation living in our rural communities and some lack access to basic resources.

Why would we want to add more barriers for them?

It is very harmful to one's emotional and spiritual being to be left out. Youth can carry that pain with them throughout life. Is that a life skill we want to teach? This bill is an attack on our youth. This is not the North Dakota way I was raised to live.

I will feel so much shame being a North Dakota voting resident if this bill passes. Please give this bill a Do Not Pass recommendation.

Amanda Strauss  
Fargo, ND