

HB1510

Joint Technical Corrections Committee

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Co-Chairs Representative Weisz and Senator Lee and members of the Joint Technical Corrections Committee. My name is Lisa Johnson, and I serve as the Vice Chancellor of Academic and Student Affairs for the North Dakota University System. I am here today on behalf of the University System (but not the State Board of Higher Education, which has not taken a formal position on this proposed legislation).

In short, the North Dakota University System respectfully requests inclusion among the exceptions listed in Section 1 beginning at page 3, line 6 of the bill. Much like our K-12 educational counterparts already exempted in this section, we request the ability to document immunizations for the safety of our students and our larger academic community.

Students and the public are not required to be vaccinated to be present on campus or to attend class, as the NDUS recognizes the broad exemptions offered by the state, including medical, religious, and philosophical exemptions. Students are not required to be vaccinated to attend classes.

Less than 1% of the students enrolled at NDUS colleges and universities have taken advantage of the exemptions currently available to them. A request to be exempt from supplying documentation of immunizations for NDUS students can be requested based on a medical, philosophical and/or religious reason. In the event of an outbreak or a public health emergency, individuals who have not provided immunization records are treated as unprotected and notified of an outbreak. Given the NDUS and institutions' responsibility to our students, including those who reside on campus and so, unlike the stakeholders of other public entities, do not leave public spaces at the end of the day, we respectfully request an exemption that is very similar to the one that exists under current law in N.D.C.C. 23-12-20(4), and that would be added to that law under H.B. 1511 at Section 1, subsection 5, regarding compliance with federal requirements.

We seek the Committee's support in providing an exemption to the institutions of the North Dakota University System consistent with that of the North Dakota



Department of Public Instruction. This concludes my testimony related to HB1510, and I stand for questions from Committee members.