

Dear Chair Weisz and members of the House Human Services Committee,
My name is Martin Avery. I live in Fargo, ND and am an ordained United Methodist Elder, currently serving a two charge Lutheran parish in Mayville, ND. My testimony is in opposition to House Bill 1332. I ask that you give this bill a Do Not Pass.

In my role as a pastor, I provide pastoral care for families within my churches and I cannot in good conscience support a bill that would allow for a therapy that has been shown to be harmful.

I have had a church member at a church I have previously served, tell me how they turned themselves inside out, trying not to be gay. They participated in conversion therapy and were severely traumatized by the experience. As a Methodist Elder, I'm to "Do no harm, do good, and stay in love with God." I must stand in opposition to this bill.

This bill will serve will give legitimacy to a practice that has been thoroughly debunked and cause serious mental harm to citizens of ND. Passage of the bill will increase the number of people making the decision to leave the state and for those who may have moved here, to reconsider.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and service to our state
Best regards,
Rev. Martin Avery