

Testimony of Mia Halvorson

In Opposition to HB 1473: "Relating to participation in school-sponsored athletic events exclusively for males or females, the use of restrooms, locker rooms, and shower rooms in a public school, a dormitory or living facility controlled by the state board of higher education, a correctional facility, a domestic violence sexual assault organization facility, the North Dakota youth correctional center, and the penitentiary exclusively for males and females."

January 24th, 2023

Dear Committee Members,

This bill is a blatant form of discrimination and directly violates the executive order referred to as "Executive Order on Preventing and Combating Discrimination on the Basis of Gender Identity or Sexual Orientation" signed by Joseph R. Biden on January 20th, 2021. The first two lines of this bill state: "Every person should be treated with respect and dignity and should be able to live without fear, no matter who they are or whom they love. Children should be able to learn without worrying about whether they will be denied access to the restroom, the locker room, or school sports." This includes transgender individuals.

This bill provides tons of questions, including an overall lack of enforcement. What if a school hosts a girls' basketball game but only has one girls' locker room within the whole school? They can't use the men's locker room to change, as it is designated solely for men. You may say "let's put a piece of paper or something over it to designate who utilizes this locker room." What stops someone with true intent on hurting someone (such as someone intending on committing sexual assault) from putting a piece of paper over it to state that I can use it? How will you prove at an athletic event that someone who is trans has entered the bathroom not correlating to their sex assigned at birth if they appear that sex? Are we going to require DNA testing to enter a restroom within a school? Are we outright going to close all restrooms off so this isn't an issue? Are we going to install cameras inside each stall so we can see penises in women's restrooms and vaginas in men's restrooms? This is an unenforceable bill.

What about facilities sorted based on the gender on your birth certificate? What stops anyone from the states that allow changing your gender marker on your birth certificate to be placed in the wrong facility based on this law? On college campuses, how will you learn the sex assigned at birth of every college student when colleges don't require that information be provided? These questions go on and on.

I ask that you vote NO on HB 1473 for the reasons listed above, the reasons other individuals testifying provide, and the hundreds of additional reasons I could provide.

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to share this testimony.

-Mia Halvorson