

Senate Human Services Committee
March 13th, 2023
HB 1362 - Testimony in Opposition

Chair Lee and members of the Senate Human Services Committee, my name is Whitney Oxendahl and I am writing in opposition to HB 1362. I oppose this bill because I am a parent of three small children, and this bill is unnecessary. Parents already have rights in North Dakota.

There are parts of the bill that are ill-defined like “the right of parents to... reasonably discipline the parent's child” on lines 20-21. What type of discipline is reasonable? The bill does not define it.

The language of the bill on page three is especially disconcerting: “The state's education systems are supportive and secondary to the primary role of a parent.” Education should be a collaboration among stakeholders, including parents, teachers, the school board, and other school staff.

I am concerned this bill will be used to require public schools to make decisions based on the whims of a few parents who try to direct staff, teachers, and administration on how to run the school or the district. This could impact my children's education.

I am a strong supporter of parent involvement in their children's education, and there are already avenues for concerned parents to make their voices heard. They can get involved in the PTA. They can reach out to their child’s teacher who is there to work with parents on their concerns. Parents can also reach out to school board members, speak at school board meetings, or file to run as a candidate for school board.

This bill is a copy and paste of what other states are doing, like Florida and Utah. This is not a North Dakota solution to a North Dakota problem. There is not a problem. Please give HB 1362 a Do Not Pass recommendation.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my testimony.