

I implore the State to vote no on SB 2231. As the parent of a child in ND Public Schools, I need to know that my child is safe from discrimination based on gender and gender identity. It should not be the burden of a child to prove their gender to anyone. A bill such as this one would fuel the hate and bullying that is already taking place in our schools against children who don't "fit in". It is well-established that respecting a child's gender identity and using the correct pronouns reduces suicidality. We literally save lives by simply using the words provided to us by children and parents. It's that simple. By pushing through a bill like this just because of your political party will surely cost North Dakota the lives of our children. This is not a matter of urban myths (like the litter box nonsense), but actual children who are in our schools right now. Our. Kids.

Furthermore, passing a bill like this will starve our state of income and tax revenue from tourism. When news of such a bill makes it to national news (which it already has), companies will refuse to do business here and people will choose to visit other, more friendly states. We have seen this happen repeatedly. States like Florida can no longer host large conferences from industries who have decided not to partner with such a hateful state. The international Goldschmidt conference, for example (which brings in around 5,000 people to its host-cities), no longer hosts their conferences in states with anti-LGBTQ legislation. We certainly don't want to join that club, do we?

With Respect,

Michelle L. Abshire, Valley City