

Chairman Diane Larson
Senate Judiciary Committee
Regarding SB 2231
January 25, 2023

Dear Chairman and Members of the Committee,

My testimony is in opposition to Senate Bill 2231. I ask that you give this bill a Do Not Pass.

First, this bill violates anti-discrimination laws such as in *Bostock v. Clayton County*, when the Supreme Court held that Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits on discrimination “because of . . . sex” covers discrimination on the basis of gender identity and sexual orientation.¹ The U.S. Department of Education also has confirmed Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 protects students from discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.²

Secondly, the bill will cause harm to LGBTQIA+ individuals. Asking and correctly using someone’s pronouns is one of the most basic ways to show your respect for their gender identity. It also helps to create a more welcoming space and an inclusive environment. All major professional American psychological and psychiatric associations recognize that inclusive language usage for LGBTQIA+ youth and adults drastically decreases experiences of depression, social anxiety, suicidal ideation, and other negative mental health factors. Specifically, a Trevor Project Mental Health Survey found that transgender and nonbinary youth attempt suicide less when their pronouns are respected.³ Words are powerful! Basically, while it seems like a minor thing, using someone’s correct pronouns can be lifesaving.

All North Dakotas should be treated with respect and dignity. Therefore, I urge you to give a “Do Not Pass” recommendation for this bill. I thank you for your time, consideration, and service to our state.

Sincerely,



Corinne Edgerton

¹ “Supreme Court Holds That Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Are Protected by Title VII,” The National Law Review (Labor and Employment), accessed January 25, 2023, <https://www.natlawreview.com/article/supreme-court-holds-sexual-orientation-and-gender-identity-are-protected-title-vii>.

² “U.S. Department of Education Confirms Title IX Protects Students from Discrimination Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity,” U.S. Department of Education Confirms Title IX Protects Students from Discrimination Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity | U.S. Department of Education, June 16, 2021, <https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/us-department-education-confirms-title-ix-protects-students-discrimination-based-sexual-orientation-and-gender-identity>.

³ “The Trevor Project National Survey,” The Trevor Project, accessed January 25, 2023, <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/survey-2021/>.