

Dear Members of the House Energy and Natural Resources Committee,

I am writing to express my **strong opposition to House Bill 1352**. As a local mother of a nearly 10-year-old son, I am deeply concerned about the safety of our community, especially in spaces that should be sanctuaries of peace, such as churches, synagogues, mosques, temples, and other places of worship. This bill would make public spaces less safe by stripping away the authority of these institutions to decide whether or not to allow firearms on their property. These places of worship, where families come together to seek solace, should have the right to make decisions to protect their children, youth, and adults from the potential danger of firearms in their sacred spaces.

Allowing firearms in places of worship is a threat to the safety and peace of these environments. There is no credible evidence that making firearms more accessible and present in these spaces will prevent gun violence. On the contrary, it increases the likelihood of tragic incidents, adding to the anxiety and fear of individuals who come to these spaces to seek spiritual nourishment, not to live in fear of gun violence.

As a mother, I am deeply concerned that this bill would create an environment in which parents may feel uncomfortable or unsafe bringing their children to services or events. If guns are allowed in our places of worship, families may be less inclined to attend. The presence of firearms in these spaces would undermine the very essence of these institutions, which are meant to be places of safety, peace, and community.

This bill undermines the ability of places of worship to make decisions that prioritize the well-being of their members. It is crucial that we allow these institutions to determine what is best for their communities, including how to protect them from unnecessary harm. We cannot allow this legislation to stand, as it will only make our public spaces less safe and diminish the trust and sense of security that families need to feel when they come together in faith.

I urge you to vote **against HB 1352** and protect the rights of places of worship to make decisions about the safety of their congregations.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Erin Price
Bismarck, ND