

SB 2330

Senate Education Committee

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Chair Beard and Members of the Senate Education Committee -

My name is Lisa Johnson, and I serve as the Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs with the North Dakota University System (NDUS). I am writing in opposition to SB2330 on behalf of the 11 campuses of the NDUS.

First, I wish to clarify that the colleges and universities of the NDUS understand the intent of SB2330 and the assumed impact required education could have in reducing human trafficking and exploitation prevention in North Dakota. Unfortunately, the bill's sponsors may not be aware of the overlapping and complementary training that is already being conducted within the NDUS.

Opposition to SB2330 stems from concerns about adding two more hours of required education to already lengthy orientation sessions and the lack of funds to implement or contract with a qualified non-profit training provider. Additional concerns reported by campuses include the following:

Redundancy of Required Student Training

- NDUS colleges and universities already actively engage in educational programming with students and employees around topics of human trafficking, exploitation prevention, and related topics and reports on violent crimes through the Clery Act. Clery Act training is required annually for all staff that are responsible for reporting. Any false reports or mistakes result in a minimum of a \$69,733 fine, per mistake, so the stakes are high for institutions in terms of compliance. The Clery Act includes (expensive) training required under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) related to preventing sexual violence and includes hosting in-person presentations by the North Dakota Bureau of Criminal Investigation, Youthworks, and other organizations related to human trafficking and exploitation prevention. NDUS colleges and universities routinely host events and talks around National Human Trafficking Month and other in-house educational programming opportunities such as health fairs.
- Title IX is a federal law in place since 1972 and it requires annual notification of policies, procedures, how to report, and information about the process on an annual basis for all students and staff. Most campuses use training resources acquired and managed through a third-party educational provider to distribute this required information to their campus community. Further, Title IX requires swift action if a report were to come forward. Typical Title IX training on a campus lasts anywhere from 15-45 minutes. Most, if not all, campuses provide ongoing programming and education around sexual assault prevention, dating violence, bystander trainings, etc. and many partner with their local rape crisis center for this kind of programming.

- Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) requires all campuses “establish a mandatory prevention and education program about domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking for all incoming students (first year students, transfer students, etc.) working with campus and community-based victim advocacy organizations.” The campuses are “mandated” to provide the training, but it isn’t mandatory for all students and staff to attend the trainings. Campuses are to encourage students to comply/attend/complete the training.

Additional information that must be provided to students includes:

- Access to crime data through annual safety reports
- Victim support information, including details on victim rights and support services for crimes like sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking
- Issuing timely warning when necessary (such as there was a violent crime in the parking garage last night; please be advised)
- Maintaining an emergency notification system
- Providing a campus security policy disclosure (explaining how to report crimes, the role of campus authorities, how the campus responds to emergencies, etc.)

Time Requirements of the Mandated Training

SB2330 calls for the required training to take place during freshmen orientation. NDSU Orientation is already an extremely busy time for large numbers of incoming students (and staff). Last year, 2,364 students and 3,073 guests/family members participated in 17 Orientation sessions, each with an itinerary of 7+ hours and over 33 sessions. The current structure does not allow for an additional two-hour mandated training without additional burdens on staff and the extension of an already long program. Additionally, students/families already report that the length of Orientation is too long. Students would likely react negatively to this additional topic being covered at a time they are already anxious about the transition to college.

Efficacy of Mandatory Training

When considering the needs of first-year students and families, requiring a two-hour presentation on human trafficking as part of their introduction to the institution is not likely to be successful from either a learning standpoint or university relations standpoint.

Financial/Workload Impact

- Financial Impact: Either institutions are forced to reassign or hire new staff to develop, implement, assess, and report on required in-house trainings, or are required to spend money to hire outside speakers to comply with SB2330. During a time when budgets/staff time are stretched thin, these would have a significant negative impact, particularly in the absence of appropriated funds from the state to accomplish the mandatory trainings.

- Staff Workload: Development/implementation would require countless hours of educational development, room reservations, additional staff for presentation/facilitation of discussion, tracking attendance, follow up, communication, and mandatory reporting.

The NDUS respectfully requests a **Do Not Pass** on SB2330 as currently written.