

Testimony for the House Government & Veterans Affairs Committee

House Concurrent Resolution 3020

Andrew Alexis Varvel

February 18, 2021

Chairman Kasper and Members of the Committee:

My name is Andrew Alexis Varvel. I live in Bismarck.

I oppose this resolution.

It is not only a bad idea to proclaim a state's right to nullify a federal law that it doesn't like, but it is also a bad habit to get into. The State of South Carolina proclaimed its right to nullify federal statutes in 1832. It didn't turn out well for South Carolina.

Whenever the people of this state pass an initiated measure that runs directly counter to federal law, I suppose we're stuck. Otherwise, the State of North Dakota should avoid picking fights with the federal government. Our state doesn't have much influence with the present administration right now, and our focus should be on limiting damage to our state's long term interests stemming from that lack of influence.

It is the role of our federal courts to decide what is or is not constitutional. As annoying as federal court rulings can be at times, we do need to respect their authority on the matter. Rather than simply refusing to obey federal laws our state doesn't like, it would be far wiser for our state to challenge unconstitutional pretensions of authority by the federal executive branch in federal court – and pick our battles wisely.

Please provide this resolution an unequivocal **DO NOT PASS** recommendation.

Thank you.

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