

Dear Chair Weisz and members of the House Human Services Committee,

My testimony is in opposition to House Bill 1254. I ask that you give this bill a Do Not Pass.

As someone who lives on the border of North Dakota, whose medical care happens mostly within the state of North Dakota, there is nothing that makes me want to move away from North Dakota more than the state thinking it should be involved in the medical decisions doctors make. The medical care that I receive and that any minors who are dependent upon me receive should be decided upon only by qualified medical professionals with expertise in treating the particular medical issue at hand. The North Dakota legislature is not a medical body and is not staffed with people who understand medical treatments.

I have known minors whose ability to successfully navigate adolescence has been dependent upon the kind of care this bill seeks to ban. They made the decision to proceed with one or more of the kinds of medical treatment listed in this bill after careful research and under the care of qualified medical professionals. Denying them access to qualified medical treatment would have been exponentially more life threatening than protecting that access. A vote for this bill means risking the lives of North Dakota children.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and service to our state

Best regards,

Rev. Michelle Webber