



HB 1471

Interim Higher Education Committee

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Good afternoon, Chairman Sanford and members of the committee. I am here to report on House Bill 1471, the John Wall New Voices of North Dakota Act. The New Voices Act protects the rights of journalists in public colleges and high schools from censorship, reversing the impact of the U.S. Supreme Court's 1988 ruling in *Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeier*.

Steven Listopad, Valley City State University Assistant Professor and Director of Student Media, was the leading advocate of the legislation which unanimously passed last session and went into effect in August 2015. Listopad received a Hugh M. Hefner First Amendment Award on Tuesday, Sept. 29, 2015. Since the bill passed the North Dakota House and Senate unanimously and was signed in to law in April 2015, advocates in more than 20 states have been working to replicate North Dakota's legislation.

North Dakota University System institutions report their journalism programs allow students' freedom of expression. Campuses maintain that students are treated as professional working journalists, and their programs have been conducted that way for many years.