

Chairman Klemin and Members of the House Judiciary Committee:

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to give testimony on HB 1443.

My name is Kristin Rubbelke and I am the Executive Director of the North Dakota Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW-ND). I am submitting written testimony on behalf of NASW-ND's support of HB 1443. Our support for this bill is consistent with the NASW Code of Ethics which asserts that:

“Social workers should be aware of the impact of the political arena on practice and should advocate for changes in policy and legislation to improve social conditions in order to meet basic human needs and promote social justice...

Social workers should promote policies and practices that demonstrate respect for difference, support the expansion of cultural knowledge and resources, advocate for programs and institutions that demonstrate cultural competence, and promote policies that safeguard the rights of and confirm equity and social justice for all people...

Social workers should act to prevent and eliminate domination of, exploitation of, and discrimination against any person, group, or class on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, or mental or physical ability” (Code 6.04).

NASW-ND fully supports HB 1443 because it will protect North Dakota victims from bias crimes committed in whole or in part because of actual or perceived race, color, religion, gender, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, or ancestry and hold perpetrators of bias crime accountable for their actions. It will also provide ongoing training to assist peace officers in identifying and responding to bias crimes and improve and safeguard the equality and social justice rights of all North Dakotans.

Thank you for your consideration and we kindly ask for your support of HB 1443.

Sincerely,



Kristin Rubbelke
Executive Director
NASW-ND