



Senate Judiciary Committee –

I am writing to express concern over HB1298 and the potential implications this will place on tourism associated with youth sports in the state of ND. While I personally believe that HB1298 is flawed for a variety of reasons, I hope that the economic implications this misguided bill creates warrant consideration by our lawmakers, since the personal and emotional implications of such a bill seem not to resonate.

The Fargo Moorhead Convention and Visitors Bureau and its legal team asserts that the current language of HB1298 would prevent the CVB, a publicly funded organization, from providing any sort of financial assistance to youth tournaments that allow persons of one sex to play on a team designated for persons of the opposite sex. Whether this is applicable to a transgendered youth, or simply a girl wanting to play on the boys' team, this bill is unnecessarily discriminatory, burdened by a tremendous amount of red tape that youth sports organizations will have to navigate, and quite frankly embarrassing for the citizens of North Dakota.

It should be noted that USA Wrestling likely cannot be held in North Dakota if this bill is passed, and USA Swimming will effectively cease to exist under this bill. Governing bodies such as these have policies in place to navigate the topic, and suggesting that the ND legislature knows more about what is appropriate for youth sports than their governing bodies is arrogant and disappointing. Furthermore, the North Dakota High School Athletic Association has policies in place addressing transgendered youth, and asserts that policy has not once been activated. Our elected officials are literally solving a problem that does not exist, and potentially creating a plethora of economic fallout in its wake.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the importance of youth sports tournaments in our community has been made abundantly clear, and support from agencies such as CVBs and Parks Board are critical towards making sure these events happen throughout our state. COVID aside, hotels and restaurants simply cannot afford to lose such a significant piece of our revenues, and in 2021 and 2022 as other forms of tourism are slow to rebound, youth sports are more important now than ever.

I appreciate your consideration of these comments, and look forward to seeing our legislative bodies do what is ultimately right for North Dakota businesses and citizens.

Sincerely,

Dan Hurder
President and CEO
Great Plains Hospitality