

**2023 SENATE EDUCATION**

**SB 2229**

# 2023 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

**Education Committee**  
Room JW216, State Capitol

SB 2229  
1/18/2023

Relating to designating curling as the official state sport.

10:20 AM Chair Elkin opened hearing. Present: Chair Elkin, Vice Chair Beard, Senator Axtman, Senator Conley, Senator Lemm, and Senator Wobbema.

### Discussion Topics:

- ND sports
- Curling history
- ND curling clubs

10:21 AM Senator Cleary, Dist 35, bill sponsor, testified in support. No written testimony.

10:42 AM Alaina Schmit, 6<sup>th</sup> grader at Horizon Middle School, testified in support #16133

10:45 AM Anna Knapp, Horizon Middle School, testified in support, no written testimony.

10:48 AM Lisa Feldner, citizen of Bismarck, testified in support. No written testimony.

### ADDITIONAL TESTIMONY:

Michelle McKim , in support #14825

Allison Grabow, Bismarck, ND in support #14150

Teddy Meadowlark, Bismarck, ND opposed #13429

Sen Axtman moved a DO PASS.

Sen Conley seconded the motion.

Senators	Vote
Senator Jay Elkin	Y
Senator Todd Beard	Y
Senator Michelle Axtman	Y
Senator Cole Conley	Y
Senator Randy D. Lemm	Y
Senator Michael A. Wobbema	Y

VOTE: YES – 6 NO – 0 Absent – 0 Motion PASSED

Senator Axtman will carry the bill.

10:50 AM Chair Elkin closed the hearing.  
*Pam Dever, Committee Clerk*

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE**

**SB 2229: Education Committee (Sen. Elkin, Chairman)** recommends **DO PASS** (6 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). SB 2229 was placed on the Eleventh order on the calendar. This bill does not affect workforce development.

**2023 HOUSE POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS**

**SB 2229**

# 2023 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

## Political Subdivisions Committee Room JW327B, State Capitol

SB 2229  
3/9/2023

Relating to designating curling as the official state sport.

2:14 PM Chairman Longmuir opened the hearing. Members present: Chairman Longmuir, Vice Chairman Fegley, Rep. Hatlestad, Rep. Heilman, Rep. Holle, Rep. Jonas, Rep. Klemm, Rep. Motschenbacher, Rep. Ostlie, Rep. Rios, Rep. Toman, Rep. Warrey, Rep. Davis, and Rep. Hager.

### Discussion Topics:

- Curling as a state sport.
- Curling team championships.

Senator Cleary: Introduced the bill. No written testimony.

Alaina Schmidt, Bismarck, ND. Testimony #23446

Etta Knapp, Horizon Middle School. Testimony #23315

Katrina Graczyk. Testimony #23268

### Additional written testimony:

Heidi Olsen, Central Cass Middle School: Testimony #22854

Allison Grabow, Bismarck, ND: Testimony #22416

Lisa Feldner, Capitol Curling Club: Testimony #23216

Clay Feldner, Minot Curling Club: Testimony #23261

Rachel Workin, Fargo, ND. Testimony #23368, #23270

Kit Christensen. Testimony #23295

Nathan Lillemon, Minot Curling Club. Testimony #23300

Michelle McKim, Capital Curling Club. Testimony #23303

Brittany Taciuk, Minot Resident. Testimony #23319

Colin Knapp, Bismarck, ND. Testimony #23356

House Political Subdivisions Committee  
SB 2229  
March 9, 2023  
Page 2

Brett Tinnes, Minot. Testimony #23301

The hearing closed at 2:24 PM

Delores Shimek, Committee Clerk

# 2023 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

## Political Subdivisions Committee Room JW327B, State Capitol

SB 2229  
3/10/2023

Relating to designating curling as the official state sport.

9:10 AM Chairman Longmuir opened the meeting. Members present: Chairman Longmuir, Vice Chairman Fegley, Rep. Hatlestad, Rep. Heilman, Rep. Holle, Rep. Jonas, Rep. Klemin, Rep. Motschenbacher, Rep. Ostlie, Rep. Rios, Rep. Warrey, Rep. Davis, and Rep. Hager. Absent: Rep. Toman

### Discussion Topics:

- Committee action.

Representative Klemin moved a Do Pass.

Representative Ostlie seconded the motion.

Representatives	Vote
Representative Donald W. Longmuir	Y
Representative Clayton Fegley	Y
Representative Jayme Davis	Y
Representative LaurieBeth Hager	Y
Representative Patrick Hatlestad	Y
Representative Matt Heilman	N
Representative Dawson Holle	N
Representative Jim Jonas	N
Representative Lawrence R. Klemin	Y
Representative Mike Motschenbacher	Y
Representative Mitch Ostlie	N
Representative Nico Rios	N
Representative Nathan Toman	A
Representative Jonathan Warrey	N

Roll call vote: 7 Yes 6 No 1 Absent Motion carried

Carrier: Rep. Motschenbacher

The meeting closed at 9:15 AM.

Delores Shimek, Committee Clerk

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE**

**SB 2229: Political Subdivisions Committee (Rep. Longmuir, Chairman)** recommends **DO PASS** (7 YEAS, 6 NAYS, 1 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). SB 2229 was placed on the Fourteenth order on the calendar.



**TESTIMONY**

**SB 2229**

# The Flickertail Times



Chair Elkin and members of the Senate Education Committee,

The Flickertail Times is North Dakota's premiere source of fake news (satire). Additional content includes North Dakota culture, such as sports, politics (including hosting our popular State of the State Bingo), music, destinations and history, with the occasional meme from time-to-time. Since our creation, we have grown to over 4,000 followers on our combined social media channels and reached an estimated 1,000,000+ individuals through our stories and social media postings. Our goal is to provide a little comic relief in our day-to-day lives and celebrate North Dakota. Occasionally the Flickertail Times is known to cause some good-humored fun and mischief. But if we've offended anyone, ope, sorry.

It's no secret that North Dakotans love their sports. Some would argue that our state revolves around them. Class B basketball, for example, is known to empty out entire towns as communities travel to cheer on their home teams. North Dakota State University's nine FCS football championships have garnered worldwide attention. And UND's hockey program is one of the best in the country. And for the record, in our opinion, the deer season opener should be a school holiday.

But if you want to cause a little division in North Dakota, just ask your constituents what sport should be "the official sport of North Dakota." Chances are, you'll get a lot of responses. And for good reason. The North Dakota High School Activities Association officially administers 11 boys' sports and 14 girls' sports among our Class A and B schools. Yet curling is not one of the sports listed. Nor will you find any public or private college in North Dakota, from what we've gathered, that has its own curling team.

So what's the answer then? What should North Dakota's official sport be?

Pretty sure that's a question that is perhaps too big, too divisive for the legislature to settle.

But we do have a suggestion.

Currently, North Dakota Century Code lists no soup as the official soup of our great state. And we're pretty sure there's a general consensus of what the most popular soup is in the Peace Garden State: knoephla.

In case you've been living under a rock, Knoephla originates from Germany, consisting of chicken, potatoes and dumplings. And as the North Dakota Tourism website indicates, over 43% of North Dakotans have German heritage – the largest heritage in the state (<https://www.ndtourism.com/articles/north-dakota-history>). In fact, North Dakota Tourism lists

on its website some of the best places you'll find knoephla (<https://www.ndtourism.com/articles/cultural-cuisine>).

Knoephla has been the subject of television commercials for popular restaurant chains and often the menu highlight for restaurants statewide. And you'll be hard-pressed not to find a church cookbook or a local who's convinced they have the best tasting knoephla in the state.

That's why in 2022, we challenged North Dakota Attorney General Drew Wrigley to issue a fun AG's opinion on who has the best knoephla in the state. The contest was open to anyone. And while contestants had a very short window of time to prepare their soup, entries arrived at the State Capitol from all parts of the state, including as far east as Park River.



North Dakota's favorite soup is worth celebrating, which is why the legislature should consider amending SB 2229, by striking line seven of the bill and replacing it with the following:

*Knoephla is the official soup of the state of North Dakota.*

By making this change, the legislature has the opportunity celebrate knoephla's culture, encourage communities to host their own soup contests (supporting tourism and economic development) and like any good knoephla recipe calls for, let the "official sports debate" simmer awhile.

Sincerely,

Teddy Meadowlark  
Founder, Flickertail Times

I am writing in support of making curling the state sport. This sport has lead my family and I to many parts of the state to meet new people and new friends. The Spirit of Curling is one that enforces polite behavior, good sportsmanship, camaraderie, and friendship. It coincides with "North Dakota Nice" in every way. The sport is inclusive of many personalities and athletic abilities. Please consider passing this bill.

Thank you

Sincerely

Allison Grabow

Bismarck, ND

What is curling but sportsmanship, creating relationships, learning to work as a team, practicing self-control, learning to share meals/snacks, having fun, and getting the whole family involved in a physical activity.

I started curling when I moved to the great state of North Dakota, to meet people and have some fun. It is not always easy to make friends in a new state as an adult and curling opened my world to all types of people, from doctors to laborers. It has turned into almost 10 years of community involvement, supporting our youth, and getting my own son involved in it.

Unlike many other popular sports, curling allows families to connect on a different level as they have to learn to communicate and trust in one another to get the job done. There are many great sports programs in North Dakota, but none speak to the North Dakota Nice as well as curling does.

Please vote yes on making curling the official sport of North Dakota.

Thank you,

Michelle McKim

Capital Curling Club

KidzCurl

Testimony  
Senate Bill 2229  
Senate Education Committee  
Senator Elkins, Chairman  
January 18, 2023

Chairman Elkin and members of the Senate Education Committee, my name is Alaina Schmit. I am 11 years old, I live in Bismarck and I am a 6<sup>th</sup> grader at Horizon Middle School. I am here today in support of Senate Bill 2229 because I think that curling should be North Dakota's state sport. There are many states that have a state sport but North Dakota does not.

I think curling should be the state sport of North Dakota because it has a lot of history here in the state. For example, the first curling club in North Dakota was founded in Drayton in 1901 over a century ago! Curling is a good sport for hanging out with people and it's good exercise in the winter.

Another great thing about curling is that it is a lifetime sport. Everyone can play young and old, a large number of people, a few people, and a whole family can play! (if they know the rules of course) I started curling at age 6 and I love it. My older brother also curled and I spent lots of time in curling clubs across the state.

North Dakota's 11 clubs are the largest concentration in the region and the current 2022 U18 women's curling champions are from North Dakota. Last weekend our curling club in Bismarck had 9 members representing the state at the U18 National Championship. Even North Dakota State University's curling team held a title when they were the 2019 College Curling Champions.

No other state has curling as their state sport and I think North Dakota should make curling its official state sport. North Dakota has the opportunity to be unique and original by passing this bill.

I understand many people like football and hockey in North Dakota. So if the committee feels necessary to make changes to the bill maybe you could consider curling as North Dakota's official winter sport or official family sport, lifetime sport, or the official non-contact sport?

Thank you for your consideration and I am happy to answer any questions.

I am writing in support of making curling the state sport. This sport has lead my family and I to many parts of the state to meet new people and new friends. The Spirit of Curling is one that enforces polite behavior, good sportsmanship, camaraderie, and friendship. It coincides with "North Dakota Nice" in every way. The sport is inclusive of many personalities and athletic abilities. Please consider passing this bill.

Thank you

Sincerely  
Allison Grabow  
Bismarck, ND

Most Honorable Committee Members;

Hello my name is Heidi Olsen and I am a student at Central Cass Middle School. I am writing you today in support of SB2229 to make curling the state sport of North Dakota. Curling is a sport that is enjoyed by people of all ages, sizes, and athletic abilities. Being in a cold climate with long winters, it makes sense that our state sport describes our climate and our weather. Other states celebrate football, basketball, and baseball, by honoring curling we are being true to our unique character. This will draw more attention to North Dakota and those that live there. Perhaps curling can be a draw for North Dakota tourism. This is why I would like you to support SB2229 and make curling the state sport of North Dakota.

Respectfully;

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Heidi Olsen". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'H'.

Heidi Olsen

6th Grade

Central Cass Middle School

"Go Squirrels!"



**House Political Subdivisions Committee**  
**Testimony in Support of SB 2229**  
**March 8, 2023**

Chairman Longmuir & Members of the House Political Subdivisions Committee,

My name is Lisa Feldner. I'm testifying in support of SB 2229 to make curling the official sport of the State of North Dakota. I'm a member of the Capital Curling Club in Bismarck and have been curling for 20 years. Curling is a sport that welcomes all ages and abilities. My entire family enjoys curling including my husband, my two sons and daughter-in-law, as well as my granddaughter. It is a very economical sport to play since most clubs provide the necessary equipment. It is also a very respectful sport with no referees required. The spirit of the game demands good sportsmanship, kindly feeling and honorable conduct. North Dakota boasts eleven organized curling clubs which operate not only in large communities, but also in smaller communities such as Crosby, Hazen, Grafton, and Drayton. Drayton has the longest running club in ND which started in 1898. ND hosted the World Men's Curling Championships in 2002 & 2008. In addition, ND has four members in the US Curling Hall of Fame.

One of the best kept secrets is that North Dakota has several regional, national, and even world championships to its credit, likely more than any other sport in the state, and that is one of the many reasons we'd like to see curling as the official sport of North Dakota.

Please help us support curling with a Do Pass recommendation on SB 2229. Thank you.

*Lisa Feldner*

*Date: March 8, 2023*

*Re: Letter in support of SB 2229*

*Members of the House Political Subdivisions Committee,*

*My name is Clay Feldner, I am 31 years old have been a member of the Minot Curling Club since 2014. I urge you to pass SB 2229 making curling the official state sport of North Dakota.*

*Curling, unlike many other sports on which we historically have focused in our youth is a sport that can be played your entire life. It is a family-friendly sport that can be competitively played over multiple generations – even as a single team. It is a sport with a long and successful history in our state. More importantly, it is a sport that is quickly growing and one to which North Dakotan’s are well positioned to excel over other states, regions, and even nations in years to come.*

*Demand for youth programs has been increasing each year, in large due to US Olympic success and coverage in recent years. As clubs, we are working to expand our programs to attempt to fulfill these demands. With the future for the sport looking bright and the future success of our youth looking brighter, I ask to please cast your vote for a Do Pass on SB 2229.*

*Thank you,  
Clay Feldner*

Hello, my name is Katrina Graczyk, and I am here to testify on the side of making curling North Dakota's official state sport. Why does this matter? Assigning any state a state sport is nothing but a novelty. It doesn't matter. I was told a few times that a few elementary aged kids proposed this bill. Why do they care about it enough to bring this up or take it this far? First, it shows that curling has a future in this state. Second, was something I learned for myself when I showed up for a league. Lately the winter days in North Dakota have been especially snowy and chilling. It's not ideal to subject yourself to the chill of another room for the sake of a sport about moving rocks, but to my surprise inside warmed my spirits. The atmosphere was an excellent demonstration of the North Dakota kindness us outsiders so often hear about. One man I spoke to brought up the comradery about the sport and how it and only it was its essence. It's not as much about the sport as it is the people

If we're choosing a state sport then it should be one that complements North Dakota and its culture. So how does curling complement North Dakota? It's so easy to feel lonely, especially in the winter time. I've talked to many residents, newcomers, or have even heard stories of immigrants who have reported isolation in there stay here.

Compared to the often desolate loneliness the North Dakota winter can bring, curling provides an oasis of joy and excitement.

Coming from California to North Dakota was a shocking experience. San Diego has around triple the population of North Dakota, yet it's almost more difficult to find a sense of community with the people around you.

Curling exemplifies what matters. It doesn't matter where you are or what you're doing as long as you care about who you're with. I sincerely doubt many people outside of the passionate

group I met last night care about curling in the same way they do, but the essence of what curling is, is what keeps people living here.

I can't blame these kids for their passion. I'm thoroughly surprised and impressed, but after last night, I can't blame them one bit. In fact, it makes me evermore grateful for being able to move here and experience warmth and compassion in a state so vast and frigid.

March 9, 2023

RE: Support Letter for SB 2229

Chairman Longmuir and Members of the House Political Subdivisions Committee,

If you will, please picture a ten-year-old girl wearing her yellow winter coat, frustrated, and completely exhausted from repeatedly falling on the ice after trying to slide out further and further from the hack. The 42 lb rock weighs almost as much as she does, but her coach gives her feedback to improve her form after every fall, so she keeps going. She collects her reward of a PB&J after youth league and her dad stops by the John Deere implement on the way home. She fills a cup with fountain pop while dad gets a part at the counter. It's almost a weekly tradition. They drive the 18 miles back home.

Imagine her five years later with a newly printed license driving those same roads to women's league. There's cheese-wiz and green olive topped bun halves riding in the back seat since it's her team's turn to bring food. Their skip who brought her mom in to try curling 20 years ago when she was new to town leads them to a championship. The girl cleans the skip's rocks for her so she doesn't have to crouch down for so long with an aching knee. It feels helpful. A couple years later the girl is accepted among even the men of the club and allowed to join their league night to get more ice time. A learning experience to be sure. She manages to convince her dad to play with her team of men 40 years her senior. Learning while sliding in jeans proves difficult, but athletic pants are a "no-go" for dad in public.

In those league nights she learns the ins and outs of community, volunteering, and dedication. She eventually must decide whether to keep cheerleading for basketball or to start curling competitively since the seasons overlap. She makes the best decision of her life. From there she travels to Alaska, Washington, Wisconsin, and Minnesota to compete for junior national titles. Each year her team improves, and they finally start earning medals, validating years of work.

Cue college at the state's largest university. It's fall and she's struggling to make friends since the only ones she's ever been close with came as a package deal with the kindergarten classroom. The sharp move to a town full of unrecognizable people and engineering coursework that never got easy gave her anxiety and her grades started slipping away from the A's she'd known in high school. November hits, and she signs up for league at a new curling club. It smells faintly familiar, but not quite like the one back home. The people are the same though. Welcoming, overly nice, and everyone speaks the same language of the sport. Her grades start improving as the semester goes on.

Individuals she has competed against for years become teammates and close friends. One particularly competitive individual whose parents learned how to curl at the opposite end of the state 20 years ago becomes her boyfriend. Then her fiancé. Then husband.

Together they participate in various men's and women's national championships apart as well as together in mixed curling. He takes a job managing the curling club for a couple of years and develops a knack for ice-making. They win nationals and go to the world mixed championships one year. He qualifies for the Olympic Trials. She sits with some family in the stands but has a hard time staying in one seat. It's more fun to roam around the arena and catch up with the families of past teammates, debate strategy calls with other curlers, and watch the kids make signs in the lobby.

If you're still with me so far, please picture present day, 2023. The LLC her and her husband have selling curling supplies at club pop-ups across the state does well enough to buy more inventory and equipment, but not well enough to draw from yet. It's enjoyable though. She's on the board of the same club she was welcomed into thirteen years ago, and frequently volunteers there. Both her and her husband coach junior teams that have a hunger for improving, are kind-hearted to the core, and have the air of "curling lifers". The junior boy's team is just as passionate on the ice as her husband, and they are beginning to learn how to prep ice. The junior girl's team has no trouble making connections from all over the state and is developing the innate sense of community and sportsmanship of curling in their women's league. They've already brought food this year and they started league playoffs this week.

As you read this today, March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023, I have a suitcase in my car at work here in Fargo packed with everything I need to go curl for the weekend up in Grafton. A team dropped out of their spring bonspiel yesterday, and I was asked to help put together a team to round out the bracket. We've got the 7:30 PM draw tonight and I'll be playing with a competitive skip I secretly feared growing up and two newer curlers from another small town that wanted to play but were short-handed. I'm excited to go back and play at "home" and stay at my folks' place in Hoople.

The amazing woman who ran my youth league and coached me early on in my career is playing on another team, and I'm hoping we meet up somewhere on the ice. Her husband who skipped my dad, my dentist, and myself in men's league will probably pop in to watch for a bit if he hasn't already taken off for ice fishing this weekend. Grafton's younger ice guy has probably already talked on the phone with my husband about how the ice is behaving and troubleshooting quirks before everyone shows up. The older one will likely give me a short, gruff welcome and act more busy than he is, but I'll always remember him as the adventurous traveler that let me interview him for my English class and the only man I know that would pull up to a high school graduation party, pull a tuba out of his pickup bed, and play a quick tune for the grad before driving off.

Curling is full of the best people I know and I'm glad that most of us are all in it together for life in one way or another. Without curling and our ND curlers in particular, I don't know who or where I would be. Many others across the state can say the same. Below are some further examples of why I believe curling is a great fit to be our state sport.

- ND produces the top ice makers in the US that travel all over the country for the United States Curling Association (USCA) to make championship level curling ice. Their knowledge all stems from a couple of farmers from Devil's Lake and Grand Forks that couldn't let an odd spot in the ice go uncorrected and had to tinker with it to perfection. Their job of ice making mirrors their roots in that it takes a lot of love and time without much thanks. It is a blend of art, science, and secretive knowledge that is only earned from their predecessors through trust and hard work.
- Our junior athletes consistently rank among the top in the nation. Of the ten individuals representing Team USA at the Junior World Championships in Germany last week, three of them were from North Dakota. These individuals from Fargo and Edmore represented our state well and truly reflect the humility, comradery, and stick-to-it-ness of all our constituents.
- The NDSU curling club dominated the collegiate ranks its first year entering the field so much so that the entire collegiate curling system was redrawn with new rules to keep competition closer. The score of the NDSU v. Yale semi final was 11-1. They came home with the championship.

- Curling clubs were popular social environments for a long time in our state. Particularly in smaller towns where farming kept folks busy in the off-season. Since the 70's many of those small clubs have hit hard times or had plant failures that were too costly to repair. Cavalier, Edmore, Park River, Petersburg, and Langdon are just a handful of towns that had clubs that were key to their communities at one point. A new generation of passionate curlers has come along in the past few years and they're reviving the clubs they grew up in to keep them going.
  - Grafton - *Remodeled ice and viewing areas, purchased new rocks, and fixed ceiling.*
  - Drayton - *Widened building, updated ice area, and purchased a new plant that can hold ice year-round. They now hold ice for a bonspiel in the middle of summer and had a "rain league" last summer to play when the fields were too wet.*
  - Grand Forks - *Rebuilt their club from the ground up with their members' own hands.*
  - Bismarck – *Overhauled their club space downstairs to accommodate more members.*
  - Devil's Lake – *Installed a new plant after a recent failure.*
  - Minot – *Remodeled their upstairs viewing area.*
  - Fargo – *Installed a new camera system to stream all games online on YouTube.*
  - Williston – *Remodeled their upstairs and downstairs viewing areas.*
- Volunteers from across the state helped to host the Men's World Championships at the Ralph in 2008, but countless more have hosted and will host national, state, and local competitions from Bisbee to Bismarck bringing in folks from across the country and world to experience what North Dakota has to offer and who its residents are.

Finally, I'd like to quote page one of the 2022 USA Rules of Curling & Competition handbook,

*"Curlers play to win, but never to humble their opponents. A true curler never attempts to distract opponents, nor to prevent them from playing their best, and would prefer to lose rather than to win unfairly. Curlers never knowingly break a rule of the game, nor disrespect any of its traditions. Should they become aware that this has been done inadvertently, they will be the first to divulge the breach."*

This is part of the USCA's definition of the spirit of curling. It reiterates that like most North Dakotans I know we work for and earn what we deserve humbly. We respect others, including our adversaries, and wish the best for them. We're honest to – not a fault, but to the greater good and the moral decisions that will propel everyone forward. We remember our heritage and who it makes us.

As much as I love watching the Class B Tournament (I acknowledge that it did put our school on the map in '94), I'd argue that the sport of curling and what it entails at its core most closely represents our state and its values. Dedication, community, perseverance, humility, and tradition. These attributes will always be found in curlers and ND constituents both on and off the ice with or without the passing of this bill, but it would be a declaration all of us could carry with pride if it does pass. Coming from a place of sincerity and genuine pride in our sport and our state, I strongly encourage this committee to approve this bill that would reflect the true essence of North Dakota and its constituents. Thank you for your time and consideration during this busy session.

Good Curling,

Rachel Workin  
Fargo, ND

*Date: March 8, 2023*

*Re: Letter in support of SB 2229*

*Members of the House Political Subdivisions Committee,*

*My name is Kit Christensen and I urge you to pass SB 2229 making curling the official state sport of North Dakota. I am a member of the Minot Curling Club and have been curling for 6 years. It's a sport you can play your entire life, as you well should to stay active from early to later ages. It is also a great sport to enjoy with your family and friends, especially during harsher North Dakota winter months. It keeps your mind sharp and agile when we run into the dark season and certainly helps people combat mental stress and anxiety. North Dakota has several clubs for curlers both large and small. They are tightly knit communities that never close their doors to new members or people interested in learning about the sport. Ultimately it brings together groups of people that wouldn't interact normally day to day given the nature of the sport.*

*In closing, please cast your vote for a Do Pass on SB 2229.*

*Thank you,*

*Kit Christensen*



My name is Nathan Lillemon and I urge you to pass SB 2229 making curling the official state sport of North Dakota. I am a member of the Minot Curling Club and have been curling for 4-5 years. It's a sport you can play your entire life. It is also a great sport to enjoy with your family. North Dakota has several state, regional, and national championships in curling. This is a sport that was offered in high school P.E. class while my parents were going through school. This was not available when I graduated (1998). However, I believe adding sports such as curling will allow more opportunities for people of all ages.

In closing, please cast your vote for a Do Pass on SB 2229.

Thank you,

Nathan Lillemon

Date: March 9, 2023

Re: Letter in support of SB 2229

Members of the House Political Subdivisions Committee,

My name is Brett Tinnes, located in Minot, ND. I urge you to pass SB 2229 making curling the official state sport of North Dakota. I am a member of the Minot Curling Club and have been curling for 5 years. I honestly wish I had been playing since I was a kid but luckily picked it up when I did as it is a sport you can play at any age through your entire life. It is a great sport to enjoy with family, friends, and new faces. I grew up playing every sport I could, but I do believe curling is as close to "North Dakota" as it gets. My reasons include:

- It is one of the most respected sports.
- The sport welcomes all friendly faces.
- Everyone is willing to teach and help others improve.
- It is an adaptive athlete friendly sport.
- And lastly in true North Dakota fashion, it is played in the winter and on ice

In closing, please cast your vote for a Do Pass on SB 2229. If you need any further reasoning to consider, I highly encourage you to swing by your local curling club and see just how much fun and enjoyment this sport brings to our wonderful citizens of North Dakota.

Thank you,

Brett Tinnes

Thursday, March 9, 2023

Re: SB 2229 Relating to designating curling as the official state sport

Hello,

I support designating curling as the official state sport. I know we in North Dakota like to recognize all sports as being important, and sometimes we need to stand out and be recognized for our differences. Curling is an amazing sport that encourages manners, kindness, teamwork, fun, friends, and family. This sport has given me a connection in my adopted state and has made me feel proud to be a member.

I am part of the Capital Curling Club and I organize our youth program, KidzCurl, the program that Alaina Schmidt learned to curl in. As a coach it is amazing to see these kids grow and blossom into amazing young people. We have past and present participants that are working towards and participating on the national level as well as having Olympic aspirations. As well as others continuing to play for fun at the college and adult levels. This sport allows us to participate no matter what our level of play is, whether it be young, old, or handicapped in some manner, it allows us to remain part of something that gives us hope and community.

Please vote yes to designate curling as the official sport of North Dakota and let the world know we continue to offer amazing opportunities.

Thank you,

Michelle McKim

Chairman Longmuir and members of the committee,

My name is Etta Knapp. I am 11 years old and I go to Horizon Middle School in Bismarck. I am here today to ask for your support for Senate Bill 2229. This bill designates curling as the official State sport of North Dakota.

I moved to Bismarck in 2019 and started curling the same year at the Capital Curling Club. I like curling because it gives us the opportunity to improve our physical fitness, practice strategy, and learn good sportsmanship. My father and sister also curl and we frequently practice together. It is a sport for all ages. I have made new friends through curling since moving to North Dakota.

Curling is also fun because we get to visit other cities to play in bonspiels. My family has been to Fargo, Grafton and Williston to curl. I even went to Moosejaw. It's helped me learn more about our new home.

Most importantly, the sport is fun. I recommend it to anyone who has not tried it before, especially other kids.

This bill will designate curling as the official State sport of North Dakota. By voting for this bill, you will be helping to promote and to recognize the hard work and fun that we put into curling. I hope you will vote yes for this bill.

Thank you for listening to my testimony and I ask you to support Senate Bill 2229.

*Date: March 8, 2023*

*Re: Letter in support of SB 2229*

*Members of the House Political Subdivisions Committee,*

*My name is Brittany Taciuk and I urge you to pass SB 2229 making curling the official state sport of North Dakota. I am a member of the Minot Curling Club and have been curling for 17 years. It's a sport you can play your entire life. It is also a great sport to enjoy with your family. North Dakota has several state, regional, and national championships in curling. My curling team started Curling for the Cure and we raise funds for local cancer patients. We have been able to do this through learn-to-curls as the local population is wanting to learn more and participate in curling.*

*In closing, please cast your vote for a Do Pass on SB 2229.*

*Thank you,*

*Brittany Taciuk*

*Minot resident*

Chairman Longmuir and members of the committee,

I am writing to you to share a story in support of SB 2229, a bill to make curling the state sport of North Dakota.

My wife and older daughter were recently stranded in Steele, ND during a snowstorm. They were returning from a daytrip to Fargo and couldn't quite make it back to Bismarck. When the roads became too dangerous, they pulled over and tried to find a hotel room. Everything was full. Fortunately, they stopped in a community that demonstrates the best North Dakota has to offer. Local residents pitched in to take care of all the stranded travelers. Cots were set up and food arrived. My family was well taken care of until they could make their way home the next day.

During their stay, my wife sent me pictures of their accommodations and of some of the volunteers preparing food. I was struck by how much it looked like the meals teams share at the curling club after league each night. When I started curling several years ago, I did not know that it is a curling tradition for one team to bring food to share with the rest of the league. That fellowship has become my favorite part of the curling season. We spend as much time off the ice together as we do on it. It shows that curling is more than a sport. It is also a community based on caring volunteerism, just like the small towns that are the backbone of North Dakota. Through the friendships I have made off the ice at curling, I know that if I ever need the type of help my family received in Steele, all I have to do is reach out to the curling community here in Bismarck. It is my "small town".

North Dakota experienced many changes prior to my family's arrival in 2019, one of them being a migration of people from small towns to larger ones. Life in small towns is not always easy and it requires a commitment to community to be truly successful. As residents leave, one can be left to wonder if the spirit that makes these communities special will survive. My family's experiences in Steele and the Capital Curling Club here in Bismarck prove that spirit is alive and well. The committed community that volunteered to help my family in Steele is the same community I break bread with each week at the curling club.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to support this bill. Voting to make curling the state sport of North Dakota is a way to recognize the many ways that North Dakotans care for and support each other. Passage of SB 2229 will enshrine a significant piece of what makes North Dakota a great place to live, its sense of community.

Sincerely,

//signed//

Colin A. Knapp  
Bismarck, ND

March 9, 2023

RE: Correction in Previous Testimony Support Letter for SB 2229 Document No. 23270

Chairman Longmuir and Members of the House Political Subdivisions Committee,

As I re-read my submission this morning, I realized I'd made an error in my previous lengthy testimony (Document No. 23270).

I had stated that *"today, March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023, I have a suitcase in my car at work here in Fargo packed with everything I need to go curl for the weekend up in Grafton... We've got the 7:30 PM draw tonight..."*, when in fact I won't be in that particular scenario until this time tomorrow.

At 7:30 PM tonight I'll instead be on the ice with my mixed team as I have been most Thursday evenings November to April the last 5+ years. I think I was mentally a day ahead looking forward to leaving work on Friday afternoon to head up North.

It's been a few years since Grafton has had a bonspiel large enough to demand a Thursday start time, but I'll welcome the Fridays off when they reach that level of engagement again in the near future.

Apologies for my error and as always,

Good Curling,

Rachel Workin  
Workin Curling Supplies  
Fargo, ND



Testimony  
Senate Bill 2229  
House Political Subdivisions Committee  
Representative Longmuir, Chairman  
March 9, 2023

Chairman and members of the committee, my name is Alaina Schmit I am 11 years old and I live in Bismarck. I am here today in support of Senate Bill 2229 because I think that curling should be North Dakota's state sport. There are many states that have a state sport but North Dakota does not.

I think curling should be the state sport of North Dakota because it has a lot of history here in the state. For example, the first curling club in North Dakota was founded in Drayton in 1901 over a century ago! Curling is a good sport for hanging out with people and it's good exercise in the winter.

Another great thing about curling is that it is a lifetime sport. Everyone can play young and old, a large number of people, a few people, and a whole family can play! (if they know the rules of course). I started curling at age 6 and I love it. My older brother also curled and I spent lots of time in curling clubs across the state.

North Dakota's 11 clubs are the largest concentration in the region and the 2022 U18 women's curling champions are from North Dakota. Recently our curling club in Bismarck had 9 members representing the state at the U18 National Championship. Even North Dakota State University's curling team held a title when they were the 2019 College Curling Champions.

Last week WDAY-TV shared the story of Carolyn Nelson of Fargo who at 81 years old is not only still curling but has curled with her daughter for 30 years. She continued to curl after back and shoulder surgery, knee replacement and cancer. I can't think of another sport you could say that about.

I understand many people like football, basketball, or hockey in North Dakota. So if the committee feels necessary to make changes to the bill maybe you could consider curling as North Dakota's official family sport, lifetime sport, or winter sport?

No other state has curling as their state sport and I think North Dakota should make curling its official state sport. North Dakota has the opportunity to be unique and original by passing this bill.

Thank you for your consideration and I am happy to answer any questions.