

**2023 HOUSE JUDICIARY**

**HB 1173**

# 2023 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

**Judiciary Committee**  
Room JW327B, State Capitol

HB 1173  
1/16/2023

Relating to the annual observance of Right-To-Life Day; and to declare an emergency

Chairman Klemin opened the hearing on HB 1173 at 10:55 AM

Members present: Chairman Klemin, Vice Chairman Karls, Rep. Bahl, Rep. Christensen, Rep. Cory, Rep. Henderson, Rep. S. Olson, Rep. Rios, Rep. S. Roers Jones, Rep. Satrom, Rep. Schneider, Rep. VanWinkle, Rep. Vetter

## Discussion Topics:

- Right to life day definition
- Recognized date

Rep. Prichard: Introduced the bill. Testimony #13344

Sierra Heitkamp: Legislative Director for ND Right to Life. Testimony #21219

Mark Jorristma: ND Family Alliance. In support. Testimony # 13381

Christopher Dobson, ND Catholic Alliance: In support. No written testimony.

Hearing closed at 11:09 AM.

Rep. Satrom moved amendment 23.0377.02001.

Seconded by Rep. VanWinkle

| <b>Representatives</b>             | <b>Vote</b> |
|------------------------------------|-------------|
| Representative Lawrence R. Klemin  | Y           |
| Representative Karen Karls         | Y           |
| Representative Landon Bahl         | Y           |
| Representative Cole Christensen    | Y           |
| Representative Claire Cory         | Y           |
| Representative Donna Henderson     | Y           |
| Representative SuAnn Olson         | Y           |
| Representative Nico Rios           | Y           |
| Representative Shannon Roers Jones | Y           |
| Representative Bernie Satrom       | Y           |
| Representative Mary Schneider      | Y           |
| Representative Lori VanWinkle      | Y           |
| Representative Steve Vetter        | Y           |

Roll call vote: 13 Yes 0 No 0 Absent; motion carried.

Rep. Satrom moved a Do Pass as Amended;  
Seconded by Rep. Christensen

| <b>Representatives</b>             | <b>Vote</b> |
|------------------------------------|-------------|
| Representative Lawrence R. Klemin  | Y           |
| Representative Karen Karls         | Y           |
| Representative Landon Bahl         | Y           |
| Representative Cole Christensen    | Y           |
| Representative Claire Cory         | Y           |
| Representative Donna Henderson     | Y           |
| Representative SuAnn Olson         | Y           |
| Representative Nico Rios           | Y           |
| Representative Shannon Roers Jones | Y           |
| Representative Bernie Satrom       | Y           |
| Representative Mary Schneider      | N           |
| Representative Lori VanWinkle      | Y           |
| Representative Steve Vetter        | Y           |

Roll call vote: 12 Yes 1 No 0 Absent

Motion carried. Carrier: Rep. Karls

**Additional written testimony:**

Doug Sharbono, citizen: Testimony #13279

Meeting closed at 11:16 AM.

Delores Shimek, Committee Clerk

January 16, 2023

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO HOUSE BILL NO. 1173

Page 1, line 2, remove "; and to declare an emergency"

Page 1, remove line 10

Renumber accordingly

AK  
1-16-23  
(1-1)

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE**

**HB 1173: Judiciary Committee (Rep. Klemin, Chairman) recommends AMENDMENTS AS FOLLOWS** and when so amended, recommends **DO PASS** (12 YEAS, 1 NAY, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). HB 1173 was placed on the Sixth order on the calendar.

Page 1, line 2, remove "; and to declare an emergency"

Page 1, remove line 10

Renumber accordingly

**2023 SENATE STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

**HB 1173**

# 2023 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

State and Local Government Committee  
Room JW216, State Capitol

HB 1173  
3/30/2023

Relating to the annual observance of Right to Life Day.

10:00 AM Vice Chair Barta opened the hearing. Present: Vice Chair Barta, Sen Cleary, Sen Estenson, Sen J Lee, and Sen Braunberger. Sen Roers is absent.

**Discussion Topics:**

- Observance day
- Holidays
- Respect Life Week

Rep Prichard, Dist 8, bill sponsor testified in support with no written testimony.

Sierra Heitkamp, ND Right to Life Legislative Director testified in support #27073.

Jacob Thomsen, ND Family Alliance testified in support #27041.

**Additional written testimony:**

Arielle Neumann, Grand Forks, ND in support #27023.

10:30 AM Vice Chair Barta closed the hearing.

*Pam Dever, Committee Clerk*

# 2023 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

State and Local Government Committee  
Room JW216, State Capitol

HB 1173  
3/30/2023

|   |
|---|
| Relating to the annual observance of Right to Life Day. |
|---|

3:14 PM Vice Chair Barta opened committee work.

Present: Vice Chair Barta, Sen Cleary, Sen Estenson, Sen J Lee, and Sen Braunberger.

Absent: Senator Roers

**Discussion Topics:**

- Committee action

Sen Estenson moved a DO PASS.

Sen Cleary seconded the motion.

| Senators                 | Vote |
|--------------------------|------|
| Senator Kristin Roers    | AB   |
| Senator Jeff Barta       | Y    |
| Senator Ryan Braunberger | N    |
| Senator Sean Cleary      | Y    |
| Senator Judy Estenson    | Y    |
| Senator Judy Lee         | Y    |

ROLL CALL VOTE: YES – 4 NO – 1 Absent – 1 Motion PASSED

Sen Estenson will carry the bill.

3:15 PM Vice Chair Barta adjourned the meeting.

*Pam Dever, Committee Clerk*



**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE**

**HB 1173, as engrossed: State and Local Government Committee (Sen. K. Roers, Chairman)** recommends **DO PASS** (4 YEAS, 1 NAY, 1 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). Engrossed HB 1173 was placed on the Fourteenth order on the calendar. This bill does not affect workforce development.

**TESTIMONY**

**HB 1173**

**Do Pass Testimony  
of Doug Sharbono, citizen of North Dakota  
on HB1173  
in the Sixty-eighth Legislative Assembly of North Dakota**

Dear Chairman Klemin and members of the House Judiciary Committee,

I am writing as a citizen and believe HB1173 is desired legislation to commemorate Right-to-Life Day observed annually on January 22. The US Government has chosen to observe this day in past years. As a state, it would be good for us to choose this as well.

The Federal Government from the consent of the governed, has given us its general philosophies on government in the Declaration of Independence. One of the key points is Life. Following is the full preamble:

*"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.—That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed,— That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security."*

Life is an inalienable right given to us from our Creator. Please give HB1173 a "Do Pass" and let's commemorate life.

Thank you,

*Douglas B. Sharbono*

Doug Sharbono  
1708 9<sup>th</sup> St S  
Fargo, ND 58103

Rep. Brandon Prichard  
January 16, 2023  
Testimony to the House Judiciary Committee  
Support of HB 1173

Chairman Klemin and members of the House Judiciary Committee,

My name is Representative Brandon Prichard and I represent District 8 which covers all of Emmons County, rural and suburban portions of Burleigh County, and Wilton which is located in McLean County. I am here to testify in support of HB 1173 which would create a "Right-To-Life Day" in North Dakota. The intent of the bill is to celebrate the God-given right to life on the same day Roe v. Wade was decided in 1973.

In 1984, President Ronald Reagan proclaimed January 22, or the closest Sunday, as the National Sanctity of Human Life Day. Since its inception, National Sanctity of Human Life Day has unfortunately been a matter of partisan politics, as Republican Presidents have declared the holiday every year, while Democrat Presidents ignore the day. On January 22, 2021, President Donald Trump signed a proclamation to create the most recent National Sanctity of Human Life Day. President Joe Biden has not recognized the holiday.

HB 1173 would create a day of observance and celebration titled "Right-To-Life Day" in the same spirit as National Sanctity of Human Life Day. The change in the title is to (1) establish a holiday specific to North Dakota, (2) affirm the right each human person possesses to life, and (3) shorten the title and make it easier to remember. The sponsors of this bill had a productive debate on whether "Right-To-Life Day" should be celebrated on January 22, the day the Roe decision was issued, or June 24, the day the Dobbs decision was issued. While the initial decision was to celebrate the day on June 24, the sponsors of the bill eventually decided to celebrate the date on January 22, to reclaim the day as a celebration of life rather than a celebration of limiting human life.

To clarify a few points, HB 1173 would not require businesses or the state to require their employees to take the day off of work like official holidays such as Christmas Day, Labor Day, or Thanksgiving Day. Instead, the day would simply celebrate human life. Several other holidays fall in the same category, such as Juneteenth, Arbor Day, and Patriots' Day. Additionally, HB 1173 has an emergency clause attached to it. This clause was attached when the bill was written to celebrate the day on June 24 of every year. The hope was that North Dakotans could officially celebrate the day in 2023. However, it is now clear that the legislative process will not be able to get the bill into Century Code before January 22, 2023. The emergency clause is not necessary and I will leave it to the discretion of the Judiciary Committee to keep or strike the clause.

I encourage the Judiciary Committee to support life and pass this important legislation to orientate our culture in favor of life at all stages. I respectfully ask for the committee to support HB 1173.

Thank you for your consideration,

Rep. Brandon Prichard



# NORTH DAKOTA

## *Family Alliance* LEGISLATIVE ACTION

### Testimony in Support of House Bill 1173

Mark Jorritsma, Executive Director  
North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action  
January 16, 2023

Dear Chairman Klemin and honorable members of the House Judiciary Committee. My name is Mark Jorritsma and I am the Executive Director of North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action. I am testifying in support of House Bill 1173 and respectfully request that you render a “DO PASS” on this bill for a number of reasons.

First, on a fundamental level, our state is committed to the protection of life. As it states in Chapter 14-02 of the Century Code, commonly known as the Abortion Control Act:

*14-02.1-01. Purpose. The purpose of this chapter is to protect unborn human life and maternal health within present constitutional limits. It reaffirms the tradition of the state of North Dakota to protect every human life whether unborn or aged, healthy or sick.*

Second, we have a rich history of protecting life in our state. We enacted the commonly called trigger law, the heartbeat bill, the chemical abortion reversal notification law, and many more pro-life laws. Further, the number of abortion clinics in our state has gone from three to zero. North Dakotans are certainly known today as strong advocates for protecting unborn children, and I thank each of you who had a part in that.

Finally, we have other established days for observance of key values that matter to our state’s citizens, such as National North Dakota Day and official days proclaimed by Governor Burgum like National Day of Prayer each May. Why should we not have a day of observance for the most precious of values: life.

For the aforementioned reasons, North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action asks that you please vote House Bill 1173 out of committee with a “DO PASS” recommendation.



## Chairman Klemin and Members of the House Judiciary Committee –

My name is Sierra Heitkamp and I am the Legislative Director for North Dakota Right to Life. I am here today to represent the interests and legislative initiatives of their base comprised of 3700 citizens across the state of North Dakota.

On January 22, 1984, President Ronald Reagan issued a presidential proclamation designating the third Sunday of January each year to be recognized as National Sanctity of Human Life Day. For almost 40 years, we have celebrated this meaningful day and have progressed this idea further in our state. For example, from January 16th – 22nd of this year, pro-life organization have worked together on promoting educational and events in North Dakota as “Respect Life Week.”

As you can see, our members and aligned interests dedicate a date each year “...to celebrate the right-to - life, reaffirm the dignity and value of every human being, and to give thanks for the gift of life,” just as this bill says.

I ask this committee today for a ***Do Pass recommendation on HB 1173*** in order to solidify the values of North Dakotans as we continue to promote and encourage life at all stages.

Thank you for your time today and I will now stand for any questions that the committee may have.



Sincerely,

*Sierra Heitkamp*

**Sierra Heitkamp**

**NDRL Legislative Director**

I Arielle Neumann, private citizen and resident of Grand Forks AFB ND District 42 recommend a DO PASS for HB 1173.

This bill would enact a day, "To celebrate the right-to- life, reaffirm the dignity and value of every human being, and to give thanks for the gift of life, the twenty - second of January of each year is designated and established as Right-To - Life Day." This would be crucial in showcasing respect and dignity for all stages of human life, from conception to birth, and should be enacted as an annual observance.

*Arielle Neumann*



# NORTH DAKOTA

## *Family Alliance* LEGISLATIVE ACTION

### Testimony in Support of House Bill 1173

Jacob Thomsen, Policy Analyst  
North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action  
March 30, 2023

Madam Chair Roers and honorable members of the Senate State and Local Government Committee. My name is Jacob Thomsen and I am representing North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action. I am testifying on behalf of our organization in support of House Bill 1173 and respectfully request that you render a "DO PASS" on this bill for a number of reasons.

First, on a fundamental level, our state is committed to the protection of life. As it states in Chapter 14-02 of the Century Code, commonly known as the Abortion Control Act:

*14-02.1-01. Purpose. The purpose of this chapter is to protect unborn human life and maternal health within present constitutional limits. It reaffirms the tradition of the state of North Dakota to protect every human life whether unborn or aged, healthy or sick.*

Second, we have a rich history of protecting life in our state. We enacted the commonly called heartbeat bill, the chemical abortion reversal notification law, and many more pro-life laws. Further, the number of abortion clinics in our state has gone to zero. North Dakotans are certainly known today as strong advocates for protecting unborn children, and I thank each of you who had a part in that.

Finally, we have other established days for observance of key values that matter to our state's citizens, such as National North Dakota Day and official days proclaimed by Governor Burgum like National Day of Prayer each May. Why should we not have a day of observance for the most precious of values: life.

For the aforementioned reasons, North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action asks that you please vote House Bill 1173 out of committee with a "DO PASS" recommendation.





## Chairwoman Roers and Members of the Senate State & Local Gov. Committee –

My name is Sierra Heitkamp and I am the Legislative Director for North Dakota Right to Life. I am here today to represent the interests and legislative initiatives of their base comprised of 3700 citizens across the state of North Dakota.

On January 22, 1984, President Ronald Reagan issued a presidential proclamation designating the third Sunday of January each year to be recognized as National Sanctity of Human Life Day. For almost 40 years, we have celebrated this meaningful day and have progressed this idea further in our state. For example, from January 16th – 22nd of this year, pro-life organization have worked together on promoting educational and events in North Dakota as “Respect Life Week.”

As you can see, our members and aligned interests are already dedicating time each year “...to celebrate the right-to-life, reaffirm the dignity and value of every human being, and to give thanks for the gift of life,” just as this bill says.

I ask this committee today for a ***Do Pass recommendation on HB 1173*** in order to solidify the values of North Dakotans as we continue to promote and encourage life at all stages.

Thank you for your time today and I will now stand for any questions that the committee may have.



Sincerely,

*Sierra M Heitkamp*  
**Sierra M Heitkamp**  
 NDRL Legislative Director