



**HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
4200 Mills Civic Parkway
West Des Moines, Iowa 50265**

Monday, March 6, 2023

The Honorable Pat Grassley
Speaker of the House
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Speaker Grassley:

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was proclaimed and adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 10, 1948. The document lays out fundamental human rights that are to be protected and serves as a milestone document. The document lays out 30 Articles in which it is articulated that human rights are universal and belong to all global citizens.

The Human Rights Commission of the City of West Des Moines seeks to educate, engage, and connect with the citizens of West Des Moines as it pertains to issues of human rights. We serve as advocates, educators, and programmers. As such, we recently learned of two pieces of legislation that were introduced into the Iowa House:

- **House Joint Resolution 8: A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the State of Iowa relating to marriage**
- **Senate Study Bill 1197 & House Study Bill 214: A bill for an act relating to the prohibited activities regarding gender transition producers relative to minors, and including effective date and applicability provisions**

It is this Commission's belief that these pieces of legislation are counter to various articles within the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Specifically, we believe that these bills are not congruent with:

Article 1

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

Article 2

Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

Article 3

Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of a person.

Article 7

All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination.

Article 16

1. Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family. They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution.
2. Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses.
3. The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State.

Article 28

Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized.

It is this Commission's request that the House truly consider these Articles and reconsider if the legislation that has been introduced goes counter to the Articles as laid out. Every Iowan deserves life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. The bills as presented in their current form do not allow for that to be lived.

We ask that the Iowa House truly live out the banner that is found within our state flag: *Our liberties we prize, and our rights we will maintain*. Maintain that every Iowan—regardless of sexual orientation be allowed to marry whomever they'd like. Maintain that every Iowan—regardless of sex assigned at birth, can receive medical treatment that allows for them to be their true authentic self. Maintain that every Iowan can be proud to call Iowa home because their state respects them. We ask that you consider this as these bills make their way through the legislative process.

Respectfully Submitted,

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