

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**



February 10, 2017

North Dakota State Senators  
State Capitol  
600 East Boulevard  
Bismarck, ND 58505-0360

Dear Senator,

On behalf of Amnesty International—a global, nonpartisan organization dedicated to protecting the human rights of all people—I urge you in the strongest terms possible to vote “no” on the following bills that would undermine the rights to peaceful protest and freedom of expression:

HB 1193: Disorderly conduct penalty  
HB 1203: Liability exemption for a motor vehicle driver  
HB 1293: Relating to trespassing  
HB 1304: Wearing masks  
HB 1426: Relating to riot offenses  
SB: 2246: Relating to failure to vacate

Repressive governments such as those in China and Iran are well known for passing laws in the name of security and safety that are used to prevent people from exercising their human rights to peaceful protest and freedom of expression. We are counting on you to ensure that the State of North Dakota does not do the same.

Under the U.S. Constitution and international law, it is the legitimate right of people to peacefully express their opinion, including by taking to the streets in peaceful protests and assemblies. Government authorities in all countries have an obligation to facilitate—not hinder—these rights.

The bills listed above would contradict this obligation and negatively impact these important Constitutional and international rights. The bills could be used to punish people simply for exercising their legitimate rights; may have a chilling effect on the decision to exercise these rights; appear to discriminatorily target Indigenous Peoples and their allies opposed to the Dakota Access Pipeline; and could put law enforcement officers in the untenable position of implementing laws that may undermine fundamental rights and freedoms.

Furthermore, HB 1203 could increase the risk of people being killed by removing the liability for motorists who unintentionally kill people who are exercising their Constitutional and internationally recognized human rights.

The eyes of the world are watching. Show your commitment to the U.S. Constitution and human rights by voting “no” on these bills.

Sincerely,

Emily Walsh  
Campaigner  
Individuals at Risk Program  
Amnesty International USA