

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee. Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony. My name is Cyr Cronin and I am a resident of Sanford. I am in strong opposition to LD 1002.

This bill was written for the explicit purpose to suppress the self determination of identity, even more explicitly for transgender children.

Despite children who are not transgender having nicknames, with no uproar in the past, it is transgender students, who are supported as the human beings they are, with the right to self expression and self determination, that are being targeted with this bill.

I was once a student in Maine schools, and I admired and appreciated teachers who supported transgender classmates. I've had classmates who come out as trans, and changed their names and were embraced by teachers and staff. I saw how much happier they looked when they were being supported, compared to ones who weren't.

While I graduated over a decade ago, the messages of respect for my peers have stuck with me, and will always be with me for life.

This is one of many bills introduced by legislators this year to strip transgender children of dignity and respect in school, written likely under the false belief that banning support for trans students will "save" them from being trans, but that is far from the truth.

Queer youth do not need "saving", they need respect like every other student.

This bill would only cause more immense harm to trans students, putting them at risk for harassment and bullying from peers. This does nothing to benefit the education of Maine students and sends the wrong idea of how we should treat each other.

Requiring written permission from a parental guardian or a legal name change, just to be called a different name, restricts the right of a child to a safe space at school. Not every student has loving families, with the support to allow them to get written permission. Permission slips should be for going on a school field trip, not for something as trivial as wanting to be called by a preferred name.

Why should students be mandated to be called the wrong name, because of lawmakers that chose to make their lives miserable for no reason besides hatred? should a student be silenced and made to feel unsupported over a piece of paper?

No person can be at fault for deciding a name for someone at their birth, but it should not be the agenda of lawmakers to punish people for vocalizing their desire for change when they have the words to advocate for themselves. This law would not be protecting anyone, it only serves to take away the rights of queer students to express themselves, and to punish teachers for supporting them.

Schools are for educating students and shaping them for the future, what message does it send to discriminately target them for self expression? How does that inspire them to live life?. Why would we force teachers by law to bully their students?.

I wrap up this testimony with one final message to lawmakers who are parents, who support this bill, or are considering support:

you might have been led to believe that prohibiting so called "queer ideology" will keep your children from being queer. I am here to tell you that it doesn't work.

Regardless of your current beliefs, you can still choose compassion for those you still don't understand. This doesn't have to be a Democrat vs Republican issue. This will have real life consequences if passed, it does not need to be this way.

I urge the committee to oppose this bill, thank you.

cyr cronin
sanford
LD 1002

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