

AdriAnne Cole

Biddeford, Maine

May 8, 2025

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Committee. My name is AdriAnne Cole, I am a resident of Biddeford, I am queer, and I have been a high school teacher in southern Maine for 14 years. I also advise my school's GSTA. I am writing in staunch opposition to *LD 1002: An Act to Protect Children's Identification by Requiring Public Schools to Use the Name and Gender Specified on a Child's Birth Certificate*. I cannot testify over zoom or in person today to support my trans students because I am busy teaching them, so please accept my written testimony.

My school has many students from countries where they choose English-language preferred names. We call these students by their preferred names and display them in our Student Information System (SIS). We also call students by their preferred names if they go by their middle name, or for students who go by a nickname or shortened version of their first name (i.e. Alex for Alexander). This is something we, as a culture, are already doing. We should not treat trans students any differently. For that reason, this bill is purely discriminatory, and discriminatory against *children*.

My school also has a supportive policy for our transgender students: we put their correct names and correct gender markers into our SIS, update their school email addresses to their correct names, and use their correct pronouns. This does not harm cisgender students in any way and does not create any problems for teacher or administrators, but it makes a world of difference to our trans students. Affirming a child's identity creates a welcoming learning environment. Not doing so is unnecessarily cruel.

I want to see my trans students thrive. I want to see my trans students participate in all aspects of school life and to feel supported by their peers, their teachers, their school, and their state. Though my school community does a great job of this overall, I want all trans children to have the same positive experiences in school, and that is why I urge you to vote "Ought not to Pass" on this bill. Thank you.

Sincerely,

AdriAnne Cole (she/they)