

Adrienne Horne
Appleton
LD 1704

Testimony in 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

LD 1704: An Act to Prohibit a School Administrative Unit from Adopting a Policy That Allows a Student to Use a Restroom Designated for Use by the Opposite Sex

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

From: Adrienne Horne

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

My name is Adrienne Horne and I live in Appleton, Maine. I have grown up in Maine and attended public school here most of my life. I am writing to testify in 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 and LD 1704: An Act to Prohibit a School Administrative Unit from Adopting a Policy That Allows a Student to Use a Restroom Designated for Use by the Opposite Sex.

These bills would make schools less safe for all students, especially LGBTQ+ students who have experienced increasing bullying and violence across the country. Taking away a person's autonomy to be called by their name and use the restroom that aligns with their gender identity creates an environment where more people are fearful, confused, and distrusting. Schools should be an affirming and supportive space for all children. These bills would invite scrutiny and policing of girls who do not fit into stereotypes of how to be "feminine enough" and would increase bullying and violence. Scrutinizing and requiring proof of someone's gender identity violates the privacy of all Maine women and girls.

Attending school in Maine, I experienced both scrutiny about my appearance and how I looked different as well as bullying from my classmates. I felt pressured to alter my appearance and fit in so that people wouldn't point out things about my body or treat me differently. That is not healthy. I am grateful that I was able to grow up and surround myself with people who don't judge my appearance or my identity, and I want younger girls in Maine to grow up with more support and affirmation than I did so they feel welcome and safe at school.

These bills do not address any of the very real issues facing schools and children right now. Schools and children currently have processes in place for how to operate. These bills that dictate how schools refer to children and what restrooms children can use are waste of time and an overreach of the state government.

I appreciate Maine for the values we have of respecting our neighbors, our privacy, and our autonomy. This bill would violate all of these values by disrespecting individuals' names and genders, violating personal rights to privacy, and restricting personal autonomy.

Thank you for your consideration. Please join me in opposing LD 1002 and LD 1704 to support children and schools in creating supportive and welcoming policies.

Sincerely,
Adrienne Horne