

Anne M. Gallaudet
Scarborough, Maine

May 8, 2025

Re: LD 1002: An Act to Protect Children's Identification by requiring Public Schools to User the Name and Gender Specified on a Child's Birth Certificate

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

I am writing in opposition of LD 1002.

In Maine public schools, when a student submits a written request to be addressed by a specific name, gender, or pronoun different from what has been previously used, those who interact with the student typically honor their request. In Maine, we honor such student requests to ensure our students feel seen and respected and thus welcomed in their school environment. I suspect anyone reading this has memories of people they know who chose to change any of the above. My daughter, when 8 years old, changed the name we had been calling her and we, loving her, agreed. Two of my ex-brothers-in-law decided to be known by their middle names, one while in high school. At work, a HR manager in his fifties changed his last name and we all got on board and began using the new last name. Of course, JD Vance has had multiple changes to his first, middle and last name. He was not called J.D. until high school and eventually eliminated the periods after each letter – J.D. to JD by which he is known now.

Now why recommend LD 1002? What is the motivation? I do not know, but I can see its immediate negative consequences if enacted – to invade the privacy of our youth as to their sex at birth, and to discriminate against and even cause harassment of our youth, especially, gay and transgender youth, and even youth trying out new identifies by merely changing their known names. The bill, on its face, is not about protecting youth – it is about making them invisible and unwanted and disrespected. We cannot possibly want our places of learning to be places where children are told they are not what they feel and know about themselves, and where we disrespect and deny their self-identified names and gender.

When we respect and honor each other, we grow our humanity. Children learn through the support we show each other. Dividing and denigrating only teaches people to hate and harms the vulnerable. Here we are persecuting transgender youth, rather than recognizing their inherent value and contributions.

I am a retired Sociologist and Attorney who specialized in issues of gender discrimination among other things. I taught the Sociology of Sex and Gender at the college level for many years and then, as an attorney, handled countless cases of sex-based discrimination and harassment cases in the employment context and provided advice to managers, including legal guidance on helping management work with

employees in the process of transitioning to ensure protection of their rights and preventing workplace harassment. What my education and workplace experience has taught me is that we all win when we work hard to rid ourselves of biases, stereotypes, rumors, gut feelings, etc. and instead work in the realm of facts and empathy and engage to support each other. Love, not division.

Please vote "ought not to pass" on LD 1002.

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