

Deborah Crump
West Paris
LD 1002

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

My name is Deborah Crump, my pronouns are she/her and I am a resident of West Paris where I have lived for more than 30 years. I am testifying 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.

As a lesbian, I am very aware how misconceptions, lack of understanding and homophobia can be hurtful, demoralizing and downright dangerous. This may be even more so when someone identifies with the gender not assigned to them at birth. Transgender youth may have gone through much soul searching and self-doubt before feeling ready to “come out” as someone who identifies with the other gender. This transition takes courage and often includes choosing a different name and preferring different pronouns.

Thinking how the larger culture may have difficulty coming to terms with someone being transgender, this may be even more difficult and fraught within one’s own family. It may not be safe to disclose one’s change in gender identity at home in order to have a parent give written permission for a change in name and/or pronouns at school. School may be the only place where a young person can try to be fully themselves. Using a person’s chosen name and pronouns, regardless of age, is essential to affirming their identity and showing basic respect. The experience of being misgendered – having someone use the incorrect pronouns to refer to you – can be uncomfortable and hurtful.

I urge you to oppose LD 1002 and trust youth to know what is best for them. Thank you for the opportunity to address the committee on this important issue.

Sincerely,
Deborah Crump