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LD 1002

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04574

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Greetings Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee. I am grateful for this opportunity to share my testimony with you.

My name is Kara Potter and I'm writing to ask you to vote AGAINST 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. This bill would allow the state to insert itself between schools/teachers and students by requiring schools to refer to a student by the name and gender on their birth certificate, unless a parent gives written permission to use a different name and/or gender, or documents detailing a legal change are provided to a school.

This is an unnecessary level of government involvement in teacher / student relationships. Unfortunately, this kind of overreach is becoming commonplace in our government these days.

I would also share that as a parent of 2 adults and 1 teenager that if a parent is unaware that their child would like to use a different name at school there are likely complex reasons for their choice that this legislation will not solve, and will likely worsen.

Not only that, there are many students in our schools that are above the age of consent. What happens in these cases? How about when a student chooses to use a nickname? What if they choose to use their middle name? This bill simply creates confusion on an issue that's already quite clear. In fact, many districts have policies to successfully manage these delicate situations in a safe, and equitable way already.

I would like to end by reminding this committee that we must continue to protect each and every Mainer's civil rights - especially in this moment when many at the federal level, and here in our own state, are threatening to take them away. I hope you'll vote "Ought Not to Pass" on LD 1002 and allow this bill to die in committee as it is completely unnecessary.

Thank you for your time.