

Christopher Swartley
Yarmouth, ME
May 8, 2025

**TESTIMONY OF CHRISTOPHER SWARTLEY, PARENT OF A TRANS DAUGHTER,
BEFORE THE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE
May 8, 2025**

**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.**

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

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony to the Committee. My name is Chris Swartley. I am a resident of Yarmouth, ME and I am submitting this testimony on behalf of myself, my trans-daughter, and all trans-people who are seeking basic human rights.

For 16 years, I raised my little boy and cherished the relationship we had. When my now daughter was 16, she said to me, "Papa, I feel more like a girl inside than a boy, and I'm afraid it's going to change our relationship." I responded, "first, we are connected forever and in many ways that will never change. Second, part of the joy of being your parent is to see how you are becoming and this is part of that."

Over the past three years, I have seen my daughter becoming a young woman and have been fortunate to witness and be part of that deep truth. At the same time, it is hard to see some people driven by fear of what they do not understand, use trans people as political pawns, and try to erase the beauty and truth of them as human beings and their experience. I have also experienced my daughter in substantial pain when she feels like people do not see her as a real woman, and that breaks my heart.

By trying to control how a trans person's community refers to them, LD 1002 is in complete contradiction to the very nature of being a trans human and wanting one's name to reflect who one truly is. My daughter would be deeply, deeply hurt if she was called by her old name. It would mean that the speaker refused to see her or know who she is. She would experience loneliness and alienation. Multiply this by a community-wide stance, and this is not about protection; this is an Act of aggression and erasure of humans!

This Act is also an overreach by the state and presumptuous in that some legislators, who may not even know trans people, would claim that they know better what is good for trans people and their communities.

This Act is in complete contradiction to the entire concept of human rights, to The Maine Human Rights Act, and to An Act To Clarify Various Provisions of the Maine Human Rights Act. This history, and these institutions and laws are predicated on the fundamental inherent value of all humans, not just certain humans. This fundamental right must be protected both because of the inherent value of all humans, and because our world is poorer when we exclude people.

More productive actions with better outcomes would include looking at ourselves, owning our biases and our fear, and working to figure out how to be with humans in their many expressions of humanity. It is easy to find communities around the world that include trans people. Examples include communities in North America, South Asia, Southeast Asia, Africa, and the Pacific. They have done it. Are we less capable than them?

LD 1002, put forth by some legislators, is attempting to codify complicity with the exclusion, erasing and violence done to trans people. It effectively says, “we do not accept the way you are expressing your woman-ness, your humanity.” Coming from state leaders and a legislative body, LD 1002 supports the underlying logic that motivates people to do harm to trans people.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my perspective with the Committee. I urge you to vote “***Ought not to Pass***” on LD 1002. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'C. Swartley', written in a cursive style.

Christopher Swartley