

Maeve Porter Holliday
Portland
LD 1002

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Maine
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Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee, thank you for the opportunity to address the committee. My name is Maeve Porter Holliday, I am a resident of Portland. I am testifying today in opposition of bill LD 1002.

As a violence prevention educator, as someone who has transgender family members, and as a member of the LGBTQIA community myself, I have seen the harm that purposeful and repeated misgendering and deadnaming can cause. Children should feel safe in school. Studies have shown that affirming someone's gender identity through pronoun use can lower depression and increase self-esteem (NAMI Maine). Affirming pronouns can save lives. Trans and nonbinary youth who have their pronouns respected by most people in their lives are 50% less likely to attempt suicide (The Trevor Project, 2020). Students without familial support would also have no way of changing their name or pronouns at school, which could dramatically impact their mental health and performance academically.

With all of the bills targeting transgender individuals, particularly youth, at the moment, if Maine passes this law and others, we stand to lose children and devastate families across the state. I doubt that one of my siblings would be here today if he was barred from changing his name and pronouns in his youth.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my perspective with the Committee. I implore you to vote "Ought not to Pass" on these bills. Thank you.