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As a correctional nurse, I have seen the impact of an individual feeling as though they cannot be their true selves. Alternatively I have had the honor of being part of several transgender individuals arriving at the facility and being relieved to hear that there was a process to screen for safe housing and continue any hormone therapy they were participating in.

The process that transgender individuals undertake, is a decision between their medical team and themselves. Science has proven that the human genetics creates more than just 2 genders.

As educators, your priority is education of facts, and preparing impressionable underage people for the real world. This includes emotional support and protection from bullying.

Denying an individual the right to be their true self, for any reason, is the ultimate form of bullying. Additionally, it teaches the entire student population that individuals that are different should be judged and every situation should fit into a nice and neat box of rules.

We all know that real life is not like that. There are outliers and grey areas, and often those are the interesting things and the opportunities for learning and personal growth. This legislation is intended to be applied in educational environments- shouldn't it be focused on providing the best education to Maine students? Preparing them to coexist peacefully and respect people's differences rather than perpetuating false information and stereotypes.