Lane Sturtevant
Warren, Maine
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Dear Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee,

My name is Lane Sturtevant and I am a resident of Warren. I'm writing this testimony 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".

This and similar bills are the product of a moral panic around transgender youth that has been fomented by national political actors in order to perpetuate fear and hostility toward the LGBTQ+ community and, ultimately, to impose a regressive gender ideology that will roll back freedoms for women and girls. Such a moral panic has no place in Maine, a state that prides itself on its strong civil rights protections for minorities, as well as women and girls.

This bill, which would require schools to refer to a student by the name and gender on their birth certificate unless a parent provides written permission, is a reactionary response to a manufactured panic. Requiring schools to refer to a student by the name on their birth certificate is patently ridiculous. How would the state enforce such a law? Would every student who prefers a nickname to their birth name – Jack instead of John, Billy Bob instead of William Robert – be forced to submit written permission from their parents before their teachers can use that nickname, regardless of how commonplace it is? This type of bill embraces a police state mentality toward Maine students, restricting their freedom of expression and sending the message that adults do not trust them to make basic decisions about their own lives. The ultimate conclusion of such a police state mentality would be to take all autonomy away from young people in Maine, inculcating obedience and passivity instead of self-expression and independent thought.

I appreciate the opportunity to share my perspective with the Committee. I urge you to vote "Ought not to Pass" on these bills.

Thank you,
Lane Sturevant