

MAINE PRINCIPALS' ASSOCIATION



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MPA is an Equal
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TO: Committee on Judiciary
FROM: Maine Principals' Association Legislative Committee
RE: Neither For Nor 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
DATE: May 8, 2025

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and distinguished members of the Committee on Judiciary. My name is Dr. Holly Blair, and I am the Executive Director of the Maine Principals' Association – Professional Division. The MPA represents more than 700 PreK-12 Principals and Assistant Principals, CTE Directors and Assistant Directors, and Athletic Directors of public and private schools in Maine.

The MPA Legislative Committee is neither for nor against LD 1002 as we have concerns about the potential unintended consequences of this legislation. While we understand the intent of the bill, there are several areas that require further clarification.

First, this bill appears to conflict with the Maine Human Rights Act, which protects individuals from discrimination based on gender identity. Additionally, it may contradict existing laws that allow students to make decisions about how they are identified in school.

Furthermore, this legislation could create challenges beyond its intended scope. For example, it would prevent schools from using nicknames, which are common and often preferred by students for various reasons. This could also pose difficulties for international students whose given names may not easily translate into English, making it harder for them to assimilate into their new environment.

Another major concern is that many children feel safer at school than at home. Schools provide a supportive space where students can express themselves without fear of rejection or harm. Restricting their ability to use their chosen name or gender identity could negatively impact their well-being.

We all want to protect children, but it is crucial to consider the ripple effects of this bill. There is a significant amount of gray area that needs to be addressed before fully supporting this legislation. Further clarity is needed to ensure that the bill does not inadvertently harm students or limit their ability to feel safe and accepted in school.

We urge the committee to carefully examine these concerns and consider potential revisions to better serve all students.

Please note that this testimony was submitted based off of the original bill and not additional amendments that may be presented.