

Kristen York
Winslow, Maine
March 4th, 2025

I appreciate the opportunity to address this Committee today.

My name is Kristen York--I am here before you today, in support of LD 260. I am speaking up for all people that believe their rights are being impinged and impeded upon.

I am an autistic, disabled and non-binary individual. I know my role as a healer and influencer has a significant impact in this world. And for interpretations of an archaic document and perceived way of thinking to try and make me feel that I am less of a person--and to attempt to draw out insecurities in me, by trying to make me feel that others deserve better treatment than me, based on my gender, abilities, sexual orientation etc., is barbaric, flawed and ludicrous.

Growing up, I had a propensity to participate in activities that deemed me as a "Tom Boy". I wanted short hair--but was forced to grow it long, because I was conditioned to believe girls are supposed to have long hair. I was stripped of the opportunity to grow into and discover my identity, as it was chosen for me-- predetermined. It was essentially stolen from me.

I did not know that non-binary was an option for me, until last year. Being autistic, my reality in this world differs from neurotypicals---I view things and process things differently from others. Something I have grown to love about myself---all while society seemed to shun me for it, and treat me like an outcast.

Being autistic was withheld from me. Autism is pronounced in my family, and extends to one of my children. I was not diagnosed when I was a child, as one of my brothers was--because autism presents differently amongst the genders--and was overlooked in me, because the diagnostic tools were modeled after how it presents in males. Thank goodness this is changing.

I imagine how different my life would have been for me, if I was given all of the proper tools. I would have loved myself as a child, teen and adult. I would have avoided downward spirals of self loathing and feelings of inadequacy--that led to harmful addictions. How beautiful the thought... I would have loved myself, as I do now, since the discovery of my autism and being non-binary. I have learned to love myself--fervently. Now imagine when everyone else will be given the tools and support they need.

I am confident this will transpire...

The world I choose to live in---respects all beings, where everyone is treated with dignity, equality, equity and fairness. No exceptions!

A revolution of love and mutual respect is upon us---and it will thrive.

The 14th Amendment is abundantly clear. It stipulates that all citizens will not have their privileges or immunities limited, reduced, or restricted---and that any person will be denied or deprived equal protection of the law. This is an extremely inclusive statement, with no wiggle room for loopholes, or space to misinterpret it.

So, what it boils down to, is there is misinformation and falsehoods that are being spread, trying to elicit fear in certain individuals, that they do not have equal rights. This is utter nonsense!

This is an extremely easy fix. Comfort the minds of all that have been affected by this fear mongering---and put into writing, a detailed amendment that is even more inclusive than the existing inclusive document. I implore you, please vote "Ought to Pass".

Thank you.

Love, light & healing...

~ Kristen York

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