



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Testimony on LD 1002

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Esteemed Members of the Judiciary Committee,

My name is Representative Sheila Lyman, and I am a parent, concerned citizen, and educator from Livermore Falls, Maine. I am writing to express my strong support for **L.D. 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."**

I believe this bill is a crucial and common-sense measure that brings necessary clarity and structure to how schools interact with and identify minor students. It offers a straightforward approach to a sensitive issue, prioritizing parental rights and ensuring clear administrative guidelines within our public and charter schools. My support for this legislation is rooted in several key principles.

Firstly, this bill prioritizes the fundamental role and rights of parents in the education and upbringing of their minor children. The proposed language ensures that decisions regarding a student's name and gender identification within the school setting are made in partnership with, and with the explicit consent of the parent or legal guardian. At its core, this bill affirms the fundamental right of parents to direct the education and upbringing of their children. A child's official birth record states the name and gender as the legal identifiers recognized by the state. This is not about restricting a student's identity; it is about recognizing the legal and ethical responsibility of parents to guide their children through these complex issues, especially during their formative years.

Secondly, the bill provides a clear and consistent standard for school personnel. By establishing the student's official record of birth as the baseline for identification, it removes ambiguity and potential conflict in daily interactions. This consistency benefits both students and staff, ensuring that official records and communication align with a verifiable document. This bill guarantees that schools are operating within the legal framework established, by a child's birth certificate. It explicitly requires parental written permission or documentation for a legal change. This demonstrates flexibility while maintaining the principle of parental authority in decisions concerning minor children.

Thirdly, this bill is about establishing a default standard based on legal documentation and empowering parents to make informed decisions about how their child is addressed at school. It



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recognizes that discussions around a child's identity are often deeply personal and best navigated within the family unit, with parental consent. It reduces the potential for confusion or conflict that could arise from inconsistent practices across schools or classrooms. This allows educators to focus on their primary role: providing a quality education to all students.

In a time when schools are navigating increasingly complex social issues, providing clear guidance on how to officially identify students is essential for maintaining order, ensuring accurate record-keeping, and fostering a predictable environment for both students and staff. This bill establishes a clear process for addressing student name and gender for school record. It ensures that schools are operating with a framework that is legally sound and respects the fundamental role of parents in the lives of their children. This bill does precisely that.

I urge you to support L.D. 1002. It is a responsible and necessary step to ensure that our public schools operate with clarity, consistency, and respect for parental rights.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important matter.