

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee, thank you for your time and allowing me to speak. My name is Mike Young, a resident of Canton, ME, and I'm here to implore you to vote against every anti-trans bill you'll hear today, and every day henceforth.

I have a good friend—we'll call him Bill. Bill and I have been friends for almost 15 years, which has given me the opportunity to watch his family grow. His youngest daughter, we'll call her Sam, was a brilliant kid. She still is, but she used to be, too!

Sam was endlessly curious, had fantastic grades, and made friends everywhere she went. But around about 9th grade, she began to withdraw. She started failing classes, lost interest in her hobbies, and stopped hanging out with her friends. She also started self-harming... So, Bill and his wife sent Sam to a therapist specializing in depression in teens.

Sam and her therapist had a fantastic relationship, but she couldn't bring herself to talk about one thing.

But one day, Sam sat her parents down and said, "Mom, Dad... I want you to stop calling me Samuel and start calling me Samantha." Bill and his wife broke down in tears, not of despair because their son had become their daughter, but of relief. They finally knew what had been causing their kid so much distress.

"Is that it?" Bill exclaimed. "Is that what's been eatin' you? Samantha, come here and hug your father. I love you no matter what you want to be called."

It only took the school two days to change Sam's name on the roster, her badge, her school mailbox, everything. It was no trouble at all. And since then, Sam's been a much happier kid. She doesn't hurt herself anymore. She's socially outgoing. She's found her passion and is studying Linguistics in college. And best of all, Bill and his wife have a happy 20-year-old daughter, instead of a dead 15-year-old son.

Imagine if Sam hadn't had the most open-minded, easy-going, loving parents in the world—which she does. Imagine if the only person she'd felt comfortable coming out to was a school guidance counselor, or a teacher, or a friend within earshot of faculty. Now imagine bill LD 1002 has passed, and those faculty are required by law to out Sam to her parents just to be PERMITTED use her preferred name. Now imagine if Sam's parents had been abusive... How would that have gone when she got home from school after that phone call?

This is the gravity of the decisions you'll make today. It costs you NOTHING to allow your trans constituents to openly exist in public life. But it costs them everything if you don't.

So again, I implore you to vote against the bigoted, anti-trans slop your colleagues call legislation, today and every day henceforth.

Thanks you for your time. I'm happy to take any questions you might have.