Katia J Belfast LD 1002

I imagine that most, if not all Maine residences, would agree that school should be a place where students feel safe and supported. The vast majority of students who would likely be impacted by this law are not the students the law is targeting (students who are experimenting with gender identity). Of course there are students who ask to be called a different name than the name on their birth certificate because they are experimenting with their identity. However, the vast majority of students who go by other names than those on their birth certificate are students with names like Johnathan, who go by John. Or Elizabeth, who goes by Lizzy. Or Samuel, who goes by Sam. Or students who go by their middle name instead of their first name. If the letter of the law is that a teacher has to call students by the name on their birth certificate and you have three Andrew's in your class, one of whom goes by Andy at home and one goes by Drew at home, it follows that you would legally have to call them all Andrew instead of doing the sensible thing and call them by their nicknames to decrease confusion in the class. The idea that it is worth curtailing student rights in favor of parental rights by mandating that all teachers call students' by the names on their birth certificates is, firstly, not in line with the American values of liberty and freedom and, secondly, in practice would infringe on the rights of parents who want teachers to call students by a name other than the one of their birth certificate (regardless of the reason, which most of the time has nothing to do with gender identity).