

Jessie Muldoon
Portland, ME
LD 1002

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Members of the Judiciary Committee,
Thank you for the opportunity to submit my testimony. I am a parent, teacher and resident in Portland.

I want to express my opposition to 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.

As a public school educator I have had many transgender and non binary students. I've had students ask me to use a chosen name, and chosen pronouns, and I have always done so, without question. As a teacher, I care about my student's educations, but also about them as whole people. As young people grow, their identities develop and change. As an educator, I want to be a supportive and safe person for students in that process.

I am also a parent of a non-binary young person. They use they-them pronouns, and have a chosen name. I am fully in support of their choice to do this, but frankly, it's not one of their most important features. They are a talented musician, artist, animal lover, and all around cool person. I am proud of them for being who they are. And I'm grateful that their teachers never questioned their identity, and supported them to grow in and flourish in high school and college.

If this bill were to pass, educators would be in a bind. Do we support our students and their identities, as my child's teachers have, or do we follow this law and deny our students the opportunity to be who they are?

Additionally, this bill would make schools less safe, particularly for some of our most vulnerable students. Students who are already marginalized and targeted will become more so. Students need their teachers' support, not their gender policing. And educators need to be able to accept our students for who they are.

I urge you to vote "ought not to pass."

Thank you
Jessie Muldoon, Portland, ME