

Erica Paul
Portland
LD 1002

Erica Paul
Portland, ME
May 8, 2025

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

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Committee. My name is Erica Paul. I am a resident of Portland.

I am writing to express my opposition to LD 1002. As a teacher of young children, I know firsthand how important it is for children to be called by their chosen names and pronouns. Using a child's chosen name at school sends the message that school is a safe place, and when children feel safe, they are able to flourish socially, emotionally, and academically. According to Brenda Alvarez's 2022 article "Why Pronouns Matter," published by the National Association of Education, using the wrong name or pronouns for someone can be "harmful, and even threatening to a gender-diverse person." We must always strive to protect children, not harm them, and this bill will harm children. It needs to be stopped.

If this law passed, many trans and nonbinary children in public schools would be made to feel unsafe in our schools.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my perspective with the Committee. I urge you to vote "Ought not to pass" on these bills. Thank you!