

Sam Richardson
Portland
LD 1002

Sam Richardson
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 Sam Richardson and I'm a resident of Portland. I am writing today in opposition of bill LD 1002.

I am a trans Mainer and use different pronouns than the ones I grew up with. I struggled with my gender identity for thirty years of my life before I was able to accept myself and come out to the people around me, and I can confidently say that being referred to by my original pronouns did me more harm than good. If I had felt safe to express myself and explore my identity, maybe I could have figured myself out sooner and avoided years of lost time and confusion.

Preventing children from using the name and pronouns of their choosing benefits no one. Conversely, a 2018 study in the Journal of Adolescent Health found that respecting their chosen name and pronouns has been found to result in 71% fewer symptoms of severe depression, a 34% drop in suicidal thoughts, and a 65% decrease in suicide attempts in transgender children. If this bill passes, children's' lives are literally on the line.

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!