Emily Stephens Auburn LD 233

Transgender people's rights are being used as a test case to strip rights from the public at large, and bigots are using a handful of children as targets for political attacks. Trans and non-binary people have existed and flourished across cultures, across time, anywhere their communities have allowed them to survive openly and benefited from their presence and inclusion. It's valuable for children to have safe, supportive schools and social networks, age-appropriate medical care (including hormone blockers when indicated), and counseling. For the fraction of children and students who do understand themselves to be transgender, these supports will save lives, and the rest of their peers will see that they are all supported and cherished, that their identity and safety are respected and protected. Denying children these supports will damage lives and ultimately cost lives.