

Dolphin Avery-Grubel
Sedgwick
LD 2239

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee, I write to you to express my complete opposition to Ballot Measure LD 2239

My name is Ms. Avery-Grubel I am a LCPC-C (Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor- conditional) who works in multiple schools counseling children. I want to tell you a short story with permission from an anonymous parent of a transgender girl: Their "boy" (who was later recognized as transgender girl) was in preschool, insisting that he had to wear a dress to school. The parents finally gave in after many, many months of this child saying things like "I don't know why I can't wear a dress, all the other girls do," "when I grow up I'm going to be a girl." The "boy" would cry often and say things like "I hate this life," "I will never cut my hair; girls have long hair." With reluctance, the parents let the boy wear the dress to school. They were so scared that the child would get teased and shamed. The parent went to the door of the classroom, and her beaming, smiling child, who was "happier than I had seen in so long," turned to the mom, gave her a hug, saying, "This dress makes me so happy, mommy," and walked in. Greeted by a boy at the door, he said, "Nice dress! It's orange like my shirt." Later that day. The child came home saying they had "the best day ever at school."

I tell you this to highlight how children are not naturally prejudiced, and transgender people often know at a young age who they are.

I am concerned for the consequences of this ballot measure for ALL people. As a professional counselor, I have seen what happens to children who are unable to express their gender identity. I have witnessed the pain that these individuals feel when they are shamed and unsupported. It leads to suicidal ideation and, all too often, suicide. This measure will cause transgender people to be in danger of harassment, emotional abuse, and physical harm, but it will hurt us all.

The sponsors of this measure believe that it protects girls by keeping girls and boys separate. As things are now, we do keep boys and girls separate. It has proven to work and be safe. However, if this measure is passed, it will do the OPPOSITE. It will take a number of boys and force them to play on the girls' team or against girls and use the girls' bathroom. It will force a number of girls to play on the boys' team or against boys and force these girls to go to the boys' bathroom. This is NOT safe for ANYONE. What happens to all the people who don't fit the stereotype of their gender? What happens when they are accused and harassed? Do our kids have to carry birth certificates? This measure will do exactly what it aims to protect against.

If we are to decide that a whole group of people are criminals/cheats just for wanting to go to that bathroom or play a sport, we are no better than the racist people who supported segregation because they thought black people had an unfair advantage or would rape any white woman they were left alone with. Prejudice is prejudice, and this initiative is clearly that. Ignoring nature (there are hundreds of transgender species on this earth) and science to decide that people who experience being transgender are not valid is cruel. Ignoring that a transgender boy is a boy and a transgender girl is a girl is cruel.

This measure is dangerous. As someone who has seen the damage of the rhetoric already, as I sit with children feeling scared of their future, I encourage you to please be curious, educate yourself and others, and do all that you can to keep this from passing.

Thank you for your time,
Dolphin Avery-Grubel