



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Testimony
In Support of

LD 678 An Act to Require Parental Approval for Public School Employees to Use a Name or Pronoun Other than a Child's Given Name or Pronoun Corresponding to the Gender on the Child's Birth Certificate

Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and the members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary

My name is Reagan Paul and I represent House District 37. I am before you today to testify as a co-sponsor in support of **LD 678 “An Act to Require Parental Approval for Public School Employees to Use a Name or Pronoun Other than a Child's Given Name or Pronoun Corresponding to the Gender on the Child's Birth Certificate.”**

Extreme ideologies are quickly taking root in Maine's K-12 public schools through new school policies, practices, and curriculums — with devastating effects on students. Some Mainers are turning a blind eye, while others are speaking up against political and social indoctrination that threatens our children's education and the very fabric of our nation. One radical development is in the area of sex and gender. Despite the biological reality of only two distinct sexes, schools embrace, and in some cases actively promote, students questioning and then self-selecting their gender based upon how they feel. So let's talk about that.

According to the *The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5)* and the American Psychiatric Association, gender dysphoria is considered a mental illness with psychological distress that results from an incongruence between biology and feelings. So let's touch briefly on another psychiatric disorder

Anorexia is an incongruence between how a person looks and how a person feels they look. Do we affirm their body dysmorphia and tell them they really are overweight and should continue to starve themselves? Is that loving? In what other psychiatric condition do we affirm rather than try to cure? In what other disorder do we affirm the delusion rather than help them out of it?

While there are bills that are being decided that are an egregious attack on parental rights, this bill seeks to protect parental rights. Parental consent was once a basic requirement for educators. Parents were deemed to have the final say regarding what was taught to their child. Not anymore. Consent is not sought or granted. Instead, school personnel now want to deceive parents about what occurs during the student's school day. Parents are labeled as unsupportive and potentially dangerous when they do not go along with affirming transgender feelings. A parent would be arrested for affirming their anorexic child's feelings. This is no different. Schools should not be working secretly and at odds with parents. Helping children through a psychological distress such as gender dysphoria does not mean you get to trample on the rights of others.

I think it is important to note that this bill does not deny children the ability to be called something other than their name or preferred pronoun, it simply puts the power back where it belongs in the hands of the parents. If parents do permit their child to be called by another name or pronoun, there still may be legal ramifications that should be considered. In a victory for free speech, the rule of law and common sense, the US Court of Appeals for the 6th circuit court recently ruled that a professor in Ohio could not be forced to use a preferred pronoun because it violated his first and fourteenth amendment rights. The court's decision is the first of its kind and establishes a needed boundary against American culture's new brutish sexual orthodoxy. The courts have ruled that one can no longer be compelled to say things or affirm beliefs that one doesn't believe and have clarified that the Supreme Court has recognized the same. Maine should be careful about the litigation they may be inviting, not just for violating parental rights but by compelling faculty and students to affirm a belief they may not hold. The court's opinion in the Ohio case is long overdue comfort to those who refuse to bend the knee on leftist group think- the kind that forces a subjective manipulable view of one's personal self must become a defining reality for everyone else. There are realities that exist independent of our wishes to the contrary.

Thank you for your time