

Chair Dembrow, Vice-Chair Thomsen, and members of the committee,

I am a Junior in high school who has been out as non-binary since the end of 8th grade, and out as an unlabeled to pansexual identity since 5th grade. Throughout my years of schooling so far, I have felt the most disconnect since I came out as LGBTQ, especially non-binary. There have been many struggles brought forward especially with lack of accessible bathrooms without having to go to a teacher for a key first, and lack of understanding toward gender identities and preferred names. There have especially been issues with getting preferred names and pronouns in the schools system in a way that teachers can see them and use them respectively. There have also been issues with sports and discomfort within the team because of lack of understanding from coaches and kids, as well as being put on gendered teams when one may not feel comfort within either men's or women's teams. Lack of respect and understanding with other students has also been a huge issue which has caused using slurs and bullying to occur. All of these lead to discomfort and sometimes anxiety about going to school and not knowing whether this will be a big issue during that day or not. Though there have been many supportive and helpful moments, sometimes those can not overpower the problems that play out. With all of this being said, I am hopeful that you will put this bill into deep consideration because it could help support many youth before more issues can occur if passed.

Thank you for your consideration,

E Esbensen

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