

Testimony on HB0257 – Sex-based Designations for Privacy

Name: Natanael David Jones

Address:

Sex on Birth Certificate: Female

Gender Identity: Male

Testimony:

Good afternoon, Chair Maloy, Vice Chair Whyte, and the esteemed members of the Business and Labor Committee. My name is Natanael David Jones, my address is 404 W 1500 S, Bountiful, UT 84010. I love my Bountiful community, in the past I have volunteered at the Bountiful Food Pantry and at my daughter's public school. I was assigned female at birth and presented as a woman for 31 years. Three years ago, I transitioned to presenting as a man. I represent only myself and my own experiences.

My intention today is to address Sex-designated privacy spaces in publicly owned facilities open to the general public (lines 334 and 335). I would like to commend you for increasing the amount of unisex or single-use spaces. However, they are usually unavailable or very inconvenient to access. This bill is requiring separate and unequal access to public restroom facilities. It also reinforces the myth and public fear that transgender people are somehow harmful and should be kept separate from everyone else. Transgender people have been using the restroom of their gender identity for decades and 18 states currently protect those rights.

In this bill and its definitions, I am allowed to use the women's restroom if unisex is unavailable. This puts me at risk as I do not look like a woman, and I don't carry around my birth certificate with me. There was an incident in Ohio where a transgender man like me was asked to use a woman's restroom at a public space and was brutally assaulted shortly after. This also opens the door for anyone to assess on stereotypes around masculinity and femininity. If anyone, not just transgender people, doesn't fit those stereotypes and don't have a birth certificate, they will be at risk.

I encourage you to not legislate directly targeting transgender people. I encourage you to continue to legislate on privacy for all and against harassment, stalking, violence, or sexual assault.

I want to be in public without having to worry whether an establishment is public or private, and if there is a unisex option available. For example, the SLC airport is a public entity and I travel often. I also go to many of the national parks. Last month, I volunteered at Gathering of Light winter festival held by Utah Refugee Connection at a public elementary school. I would love to continue volunteering at public non-profits like the Bountiful Food Pantry and at my daughter's public school.

If there is no unisex facility available to me, I do not belong in women's spaces. By passing this bill you allow fear and uncertainty to grow among all who use public restrooms. People like me should not be erased from our communities. Please don't segregate our community, our home, with separate and unequal restroom access.

Thank you for your time.

Natanael David Jones