

Chair Eklund, Vice Chair Manning, Ranking Minority Member Thomas, and the members of the Senate Judiciary Committee

Hi, I am Sean. I'm 10 years old and in fourth grade. I am here to ask for LGBTQ+ protections. There is word called discrimination. Discrimination is just another word for bullying. And we need protection from bullies, in this case for LGBTQ+ citizens.

I have personal experiences with bullies. The worst was when I was in kindergarten. I had not transitioned yet, and this meant people thought I was a boy. I had a pink backpack. I was harassed for just that by a 52-year-old man who was over 6-feet and was huge to me. He would tell kids to not play with me and call me names. He came into my classroom and my playground to pick on me. My principal didn't do anything. She did not support me because I was a different kind of "boy". Because she had no laws in place to make her protect me, she didn't. I was scared all the time. I didn't want to go to school. I would fight my mom about having to go because I didn't feel safe at school. Kids shouldn't have to be afraid to go to school. My principal didn't protect me, she discriminated against me. I guess that makes her a bully, too.

I know there are people who are losing jobs and places to live because they are like me. I'm scared that if we don't do something now this could happen to me. I work really hard at school so I can get good grades and a good job. I don't want someone to take that away because I'm transgender and I don't want to live with my parents forever or worse, be homeless.

In the Declaration of Independence, they say: "We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

Please protect my happiness, please protect my rights. I don't want to be afraid of school or anywhere else. Please protect the rights of all LGBTQ+ people. You are here today because you want the best for your people, so live up to that. Please don't discriminate against people like me, please don't be my bully. Please help pass these protections. Please.