

Kristin Nelson

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**DO NOT PASS HB 1181**

Chairman Beard and members of the Senate Education Committee:

My name is Kristin Nelson, and I am writing to urge a **DO NOT PASS on HB 1181**. This bill was created to **erase the existence of queer people** in our state. These folks are parents, students, tax payers, and citizens who contribute a lot of themselves to make this state great.

This bill defines a person's gender as their sex assigned at birth, when in fact, **gender and sex are two different things**. Gender encompasses the social, cultural, and psychological aspects of being male, female, or non-binary. Includes factors such as gender identity, gender expression, and gender roles. It is a fluid and subjective concept that varies across individuals and cultures. Sex refers to the biological and physiological characteristics that define a person as male, female, or intersex. Includes factors such as chromosomes, hormones, reproductive organs, and genitalia. **Biological vs social, assigned vs self-identified, and fixed vs fluid.**

So, if **gender is fluid, and is self-identifying**, why does the state **have interest in assigning** these roles **for** people? Gender diverse people **have existed all around the world for thousands of years**. Here are just a few examples: (Hannah Renner, Queer History)

- Samoan people recognize male, female Fa'afafine and Fa'afatama as 4 genders with the last two being gender-fluid identities.
- Since the 1500's Naples Italy has recognized the "femminielli": people who were assigned male at birth who present as women and perform traditionally female tasks like sewing, cleaning, and caring for the elderly. Femminielli are considered good luck and have historically been present at births to hold the baby as a type of blessing.
- Two-Spirit is a term generally accepted by many indigenous American tribes who refer to people who are neither male nor female. For many tribes, gender is viewed as a spiritual entity, and this identity is honorable. Transcending the binary as a way to bring balance to their societies, helping with both traditional "female" and "male"

work and caring for the elderly and orphans. There are many variations of this and extend from tribe to tribe.

- South Asia including India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, Hijras are also ceremonial figures at weddings and births. This group could be assigned male at birth, intersex, transgender, or what we refer to as non-binary.
- Oaxaca, Mexico people who are assigned male at birth but fill female gender roles are referred to as “muxes.” They are respected for their work, bridging male and female social circles, and similar to Two-Spirit traditions, serve as religious and ceremonial figures. There’s even a festival every November in Oaxaca to honor their contributions to their community.

These are only a few examples of trans, queer, and non-binary people existing in different cultures around the world. I would like this committee to remember that by putting people in a binary box **does not erase their history or existence.**

Now the practicality of this bill. I wonder about the **fiscal impacts** to the state for a bill that seems to only serve a political purpose. What will this cost to create all these changes, and for state staff to approve them? **Is this the best use of state agency budgets?** Will this committee or the sponsors look to **appropriate extra dollars** to state agencies to make these **cosmetic changes**?

For those reasons I ask for a **DO NOT PASS** on **HB 1181.**

Respectfully submitted:

Kristin Nelson (she/her)