

To the State of Connecticut Judiciary Committee  
Re: SB 1044 (An act concerning discrimination)

Honorable Judiciary Committee members,  
My name is Brenda Jean Louise, residing in Waterbury, Ct.  
For the record, I am a Male to Female Transsexual who has undergone gender reassignment surgery back on October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2003. The United States Federal Government and the State of Connecticut recognize me as a female on their legal documents which include U.S. Citizenship Naturalization Certificate, U.S. Passport, Social Security ID, state social services, motor vehicle registrations, and driver license.

Before I transitioned, I was employed as a machinery repair technician. I worked in the electrical, electronic, pneumatic, hydraulic, and mechanical aspects of machinery repair. While I was recuperating from my surgery I was fired from my job. After my recuperation from the gender reassignment surgery, I proceeded to try and find work. However, the following combination of items posed a problem for me getting that work:

1) The fact exists that there is indeed prejudice and hate towards Transgendered or Transsexual people by other employees in a workplace. I have personally experienced it myself.

Wrongfully preconceived notions about Transgendered people fuel distrust, animosity, and even downright hatred of Transgendered and Transsexuals from some of the employees who work at any facility. This prejudice even runs into upper management and supervisory levels. The principal employees, who are at liberty to do the recruiting and hiring, know this. Therefore conclusions can be drawn that the personnel department or upper management, via the unwritten company rule, will avoid hiring a Transgendered or Transsexual into their workplace, thinking it will steer them clear of any possible employee discrimination issues.

Sales and service orientated companies have the additional fear that a Transgendered or Transsexual employee will deter business clients and affect their future business sales. This is just like the notions that many sales and service orientated businesses held before the Civil Rights Act and Affirmative Action were put into place.

2) Employers want to get as much information about your past work history and education achievements as they can. Understanding that this is an acceptable practice for employers, a problem exists for those who are Transsexual like my self. There is no way to disguise the fact of my previously being a male. Public records such as credit agencies, past employer personnel files, school transcripts all reflect my former male status. This is also true for information obtained from various computer database providers used by the potential employer. Now admittedly some Transsexuals have been able to get records from past employers, credit agencies, and scholastic transcripts changed to reflect their new name and gender, but for many others this is not that easily done. Employers need to be understanding of the dilemma that Transsexuals have in providing that type of historical information on job applications and resumes.

3) Some Transsexuals such as my self, have residual male body characteristics that can't be altered to suit the new transitioned gender, such as large hands, large feet, or deeper voices. These characteristics tend to make the job interviewer suspect that I am a Transsexual, who then without any further thought of considering me as a viable candidate for the job, proceeds to privately ignore the rest of the interview.

At this time there is no law in the State of Connecticut that protects a Transgendered or Transsexuals by forbidding such discriminatory hiring practices. Albeit that job discrimination can be hard to prove, without a specific law on the books against this type of practice, it sends a message to the employers that it's an acceptable practice to discriminate against the hiring of Transgendered and Transsexual people.