

Please share this testimony without using my real name, as I am afraid that without the protection of this bill I may face discrimination and lose my current job...

My testimony that follows is in support of HB 5723, An Act Concerning Discrimination. After many years of dealing with overwhelming inner turmoil over being gender dysphoric, I decided to transition in January of 2004. I was the top producer in sales for a company and made really good money. In my last review there was talk of making me in charge over the rest of the sales force in the company and I was doing so well they based bonuses paid to all salespeople on my level of growth. I was the proverbial "golden boy" and was on my way to a six-figure salary. All that changed though when I came out of the closet and told my boss of my plans to transition from male to female. He was upset because his personal religious beliefs were in direct opposition to what I was about to do. He tried several different ways of trying to get me to quit in the next few days, including telling me that if I went through with my transition we would lose our biggest vendor and he would have to lay people off. A week later he called me into his office and offered me a pay off to leave quietly and told me it would be the best thing to do once again telling me that if I stayed 20 other people would lose their income and not be able to support their families. I of course felt an obligation to my fellow co-workers and their families and signed the agreement. He was so embarrassed he ripped the last sheet off the entire agreement when we went to the notary so that they would not see the body of the contract we were signing. I left feeling at the time that my good work history would follow me and help me get a job with the pay me and my family had become used to.

I was unfortunately mistaken. My good work history did get me many interviews approximately 60 if my memory serves me right. The interviews went great as well, 50 of them turned into multiple interviews. I pass very well, and to most people I look like a genetic female, unfortunately when it came time for the background checks though my old name and gender would be discovered and things would go no further. I have no criminal background that would make me un-hirable I've only had two tickets in 20 years of driving that is all. No my problem was that my crime was the fact that I changed my physical sex to match my brain sex. Not a crime in any state last I looked, but I heard they are thinking about it in Oklahoma. I not only lost a job because of discrimination I was unable to find another job because of it. I am making less than half the money I was making before my transition and had to move in with my mother to get by. My kids are on Husky because I can't make a decent wage to pay for health care, they get food stamps and Care for kids to help pay for daycare. This discrimination is not only costing me it is costing every single taxpayer in the state money. If I wasn't thrown away like a rotten piece of fruit just because I was different my kids wouldn't have to be on these programs, I would be contributing more to these programs. This bill isn't just about gender it makes economic sense to protect workers who are different so they don't end up having to take from programs instead of contributing to them. We are in tough economic times and we need all the good workers we can get these days to help the economy and our state prosper into the great things they could be. I know that I'm not the only one in this situation, I'm just one of the few who are speaking up. There are people who don't fit the mold of their gender as well who cannot find work at all and depend on the state completely to get by. Why not just offer them a little protection and let them work and contribute to society the best they can?

I thank you for your time in listening to my story and my perspective on how this is a bigger problem than just gender in the workplace.