

HB 5723

Hi everyone. My name by birth is Amy, but most of my friends and co-workers just call me Ace. I have lived all my life in the very conservative town of Shelton, as a senior at Shelton High School. I just turned 19 on March 10th, and looking back on my life I've seen a great deal of struggle with being who I am. I have seen a great deal of discrimination toward others and toward me. One recent event at my job was going into the bathroom to wash my hands after a spill. As I was washing my hands, an older woman in her late 60's came into the bathroom and started screaming and yelling how I was in the wrong bathroom and to get out. I tried talking to the woman but got nowhere and she finally left. I finished washing my hands and was heading toward the exit. In doing this, I didn't know that the woman that yelled at me a few minutes ago was standing outside. As I was exiting the bathroom, she gave me a look of disgust and went into the bathroom.

I often encounter such incidents like this everyday. I am sorry that other people have to deal with the same type of events everyday like me. Discrimination like this, which happens everyday makes me think of how hard it is for me and others to express our identities, and truly be ourselves. Being gay is one thing, being transgender is another thing that has never really been viewed as normal or even accepted in society's eyes. For me to open up just about being gay was a difficult task, it caused a great deal of discrimination and hardship. To take this even bigger jump and say that I am Trans, is an even scarier and frightening idea in my head. I walk around school, my job, and on the sidewalks of my town in fear of vulgar language or violence toward me and my peers, just for being gay. Seeing reactions like those does not make me feel comfortable enough to fully express who I am.

I am thankful for the people out there that want to hear my voice and voices of others. I feel very uncomfortable and vulnerable in situations which are hard to just simply walk away from. Sometimes I think that it would just be easier to go into the men's bathroom, than deal with the drama going into the woman's. It saddens me to think of all the discrimination that is going on right now as this letter is read. I hope soon enough I will feel safer and at ease to be whom I am anywhere I go. I was born a female and feel like a male, hopefully one day I can be the person I know myself to be. One day I hope anyone can walk out their door and not be scared to be who they are. My name is Ace and I am proud to be who I am today, are you? So why let someone stop you from being yourself? Be proud, because the only person you need to prove yourself too is...you. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Ace