

I write this testimony to show my support for HB 6599. The absence of this bill deprives people of livelihoods and safe working conditions. Discrimination against transgender and gender non-conforming individuals persists, and the necessity for explicit legal protection is imperative. There is a clear record demonstrating the need for these protections: Transgender and gender non-conforming employees are harassed, fired, not hired, and passed over for advancement without regard to their merit. Studies reveal significant levels of discrimination and/or harassment occurring in workplaces across the country including in the state of Connecticut.

In addition to guaranteeing a level playing field in employment, HB 6599 would also ensure that housing opportunities are made available to all, based solely on the ability to pay and other nondiscriminatory factors. Some of my friends will testify about the difficulties faced by transgender individuals in their quest to secure adequate housing. It is well-documented that transgender individuals are shown less desirable properties when they attempt to rent or buy, are quoted higher prices than non-transgendered individuals, receive less favorable customer service, or encounter outright refusal to sell or rent properties.

As a lifelong resident of Connecticut and the best friend of a transgender person, I implore you to pass this bill. As Martin Luther King Jr. said, "Now is the time to guarantee all Americans the God-Given right to be".

Nicole Mitchell

Stratford, CT