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The biological fact is that sex and gender are complicated, including over 30 recognized forms of intersex conditions, and a very large degree of overlap in biological characteristics in the intersection of the bimodal distribution of sex as we understand it. Many of these variations cannot be seen just by looking at a clothed person, and may need specialized examination or even chromosome testing to verify. In many ways, science is still mapping out its full knowledge of the topic, but these facts have been established for decades. Sex exists along a spectrum, and that manifests in ways that can be obvious or not, but are always extremely personal to the individual, and often best communicated by the account of their own experience inside their own body, and how they express their gender alongside.

A government that serves its people cannot establish systems that restrict acknowledgement of the full spectrum of human variety. Such a system will necessarily be oppressive and force individuals whose bodies and selves do not conform to those restrictions into impossible situations that invariably cause harm.

The government cannot tell people who and what they are. It can only craft its systems as to either accommodate or oppress various types of people, including in its systems that identify that person to others.

If the US government deems it necessary to include a reference to the gender identity of the individual as part of the US passport's necessary identifying information, then the system of gender markers must be flexible enough to accommodate every citizen, including our trans and intersex citizens. If the US government cannot craft a marker policy that reasonably accommodates the gender of every citizen, then perhaps it would be best not to include a gender marker at all. A photograph match attached to the rest of the person's identifying information is sufficient for many other countries, and the idea that it should be incumbent on any particular passport taker to verify the individual's gender--and I leave the means to imagination, though i hope the imaginer thinks of the facts stated in my first paragraph rather than anything puerile--is laughable on its face. And we must still consider the puerile, because any system that opens the door for representatives of the state to degrade any of its people in such a manner should obviously be reprehensible and unacceptable.

I urge the government to live up to its duty to serve every citizen, and refuse these measures that restrict which identities official documents will recognize. I urge the government to recognize that the only reasonable policies regarding identifying gender on a passport are to accept what the individual provides theirs is, or to moot the point entirely and not include a gender marker at all.