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## **Comments Received:**

The U.S. government's decision to deny passports to transgender individuals violates core constitutional principles and undermines our nation's commitment to equality and freedom. The Fourteenth Amendment guarantees equal protection under the law, making it unconstitutional for the government to impose discriminatory policies against any specific group. Denying access to passports based solely on gender identity is a form of sex-based discrimination that courts have repeatedly scrutinized.

Moreover, the right to travel has long been recognized as a fundamental liberty. The ability to leave and re-enter one's country is a basic aspect of individual freedom, and any restrictions must be supported by compelling reasons. Passports already incorporate rigorous verification measures—such as biometrics and legal documentation—that secure our borders without unfairly targeting transgender citizens. This ban does not serve a legitimate security purpose; rather, it only reinforces harmful stigmas and contributes to the marginalization of a vulnerable community.

Additionally, the policy infringes on the First Amendment rights of transgender individuals. The right to self-expression, including the freedom to identify one's gender, is a cherished American value. Forcing individuals to carry identification that does not reflect their true identity not only causes personal harm but also exposes them to potential discrimination, harassment, and even physical danger.

At its core, this discriminatory measure runs counter to the ideals upon which our country was founded. America has long prided itself on being a beacon of human rights and a defender of democracy. A policy that strips an entire group of people of their basic right to accurate identification is not only unconstitutional—it is fundamentally un-American. It is imperative that we challenge this injustice and advocate for policies that uphold equal treatment and dignity for all citizens, regardless of gender identity.