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Like all Americans, transgender, nonbinary, intersex, and gender nonconforming people have the right to be identified as their true selves in official documents, including their U.S. passport. Eliminating the "X" option on passports and forcing people to identify themselves incorrectly, based on the sex assigned at birth, denies millions of Americans that right. Science has shown that gender exists on a spectrum. In light of current research, the idea of a simple M/F binary is wildly outdated and patently untrue. The "X" gender marker is an accurate reflection of the biological and psychological reality for individuals who are transgender, nonbinary, intersex, or gender nonconforming; it is an honest answer to the question "who are you?" that a passport is intended to supply.

In addition to affirming the true identity of millions of Americans, retaining the "X" option on passports will reduce delays, confusion, and disruption at travel checkpoints for those Americans whose gender presentation does not align with the sex assigned at birth, and whose state-issued driver licenses or other official documents accurately reflect their true identity. For these reasons, I strongly urge the State Department to abandon this cruel and misguided attempt to deny the very existence of transgender, nonbinary, intersex, and gender nonconforming Americans by keeping the "X" option available on U.S. passports.