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As several individuals in my family do not identify with or ascribe to our nation's historical "traditional" social/sexual norms, I feel compelled to speak out on the policy revision requiring self-identification on passport applications as either "M" (male) or "F" (female). Not only is this an outdated reversion to incorrect notions of how we should categorize ourselves, the designation of biological sex on a passport accomplishes no useful purpose. Unlike a date of birth (which can be used to determine whether the individual seems to be the appropriate age reflected) or, even better, a photograph which can be compared to the actual person presenting the documentation, the accuracy of a description of M/F can only be verified by inspecting a person's genitalia or running a blood or DNA test, neither of which are ever going to be efficient (or appropriate) when identification via a passport is presented. The purpose of the information on a passport application should be directed solely to making the passport an accurate source of easy identification. To try to weaponize this official document by threatening the health and safety of American citizens accomplishes no public purpose whatsoever and instead causes great mental distress to a segment of our society (small though it may be) who simply want the freedom to express themselves as they see fit. All Americans have the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness ~ it is a bedrock principle of our republic.

I know of no legitimate reason to include a M/F designation on a passport in the first place; to continue its inclusion and MANDATE that an individual has to self-proclaim something which they believe is untrue is hurtful and sometimes truly terrifying to them and the people (like me) who love them. Let us choose compassion over empty rhetoric. Bring back the "X."