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I strongly object to the proposed revisions to the DS-82 Passport Renewal Form, which would require applicants to indicate their "biological sex at birth" rather than their gender. This change is unnecessary and will disproportionately affect transgender, nonbinary, and intersex individuals who already face significant challenges in obtaining accurate identification.

The United States Department of State could maintain its existing policies, arguing that self-selection of gender markers is essential for administrative efficiency, travel security, and international standards. Removing gender identity markers contradicts the agency's commitment to reducing barriers for passport applicants.

As a transgender person, I have experienced the anxiety and tangible dangers that come with having identification documents that do not align with my lived gender identity. I have faced misgendering, undue scrutiny, and discrimination in airports and other public settings where a passport is required. These incidents contribute to a broader pattern that endangers our community's safety and well-being.

Imposing inconsistencies between state-issued IDs and passports will create administrative hurdles, increase delays, and heighten the risk of discrimination. Inaccurate documents expose individuals to safety concerns while traveling, seeking employment, or interacting with law enforcement. The self-attestation process has proven effective and should remain in place to ensure all Americans have access to identification that reflects their true identity (National Center for Transgender Equality, 2018).

The National Transgender Discrimination Survey (Grant et al., 2011) found that mismatches between a person's lived gender identity and the gender marker on ID documents contribute to discrimination in housing, employment, and interactions with law enforcement. The U.S. Transgender Survey (USTS), conducted by the National Center for Transgender Equality, reported that 32% of individuals who showed an ID with a name or gender that did not match their presentation had negative experiences such as harassment, denial of services, or physical attack (USTS, 2015).

The Department of State has a responsibility to end, not perpetuate, state-sponsored discrimination. However, the U.S. Bureau of Consular Affairs removed any mention of trans travelers from its website following Executive Order No. 14168, signed by President Trump on January 20, 2025. The Bureau of Consular Affairs states that "The highest priority... is to protect the lives and serve the interests of U.S. citizens abroad" (<https://travel.state.gov/about>).

The proposed revisions to the DS-82 form, by restricting self-attestation for gender identity, undermine this commitment. When trans Americans are forced to navigate a burdensome process that delays passport renewals or results in inaccurate identification, the State Department risks compromising the safety and well-being of a vulnerable group. This policy creates unnecessary administrative obstacles that conflict with the mission to protect citizens' lives.

I urge the Department of State to reject this change. Our elected representatives and public officials have a responsibility to protect all citizens, especially those most vulnerable to discrimination. Ensuring that passports accurately reflect a person's gender identity is not just an administrative detail; it is a critical safeguard for the safety, dignity, and human rights of trans Americans.