

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. My name is Sharon Toborg and I am a resident of Barre. I am here to ask you to vote no on advancing Proposal 4.

Proposal 4 purports to provide Equality of Rights, but it reads like the book *Animal Farm* – everyone is equal, but some are more equal than others. It would actually allow discrimination, as acknowledge earlier today by Cary Brown of the Governor's Commission on Women, Discriminatory measures would be constitutional, to supposedly remedy discrimination.

What might some of those measures be? Financial reparations? Quotas by race or sex for jobs or admissions to schools?

Prop 4 would give cover to discriminatory laws and policies that harass, intimidate, coerce, and attempt to silence those who refuse to go along with the political causes-du-jour. It's a brave new world where we're told men can get pregnant and have abortions; one can claim to be a girl one day and a boy the next; and mutilating kids is somehow compassion. Those who won't ignore biological reality and persist in their "wrong-think" are already being punished:

- A Morrisville school punishing a student for wearing a t-shirt stating there are only two genders
- Schools allow boys to play on girls' sports teams, and use girls' locker rooms
- A high school coach was fired for stating the fact that boys generally have physical advantages over girls in sports
- Pregnancy Resource Centers' speech was targeted for special regulation by the Legislature because they do not provide abortions
- Mid Vermont Christian School was thrown out of VPA Sports for forfeiting a game rather than risk players' being injured by a male player
- A Randolph student was punished for criticizing the presence of a boy in her locker room
- The Department of Children and Families revoked the foster care license of couples who could not promise to affirm the gender identity of a child that might theoretically be placed with them at some point in the future, in violation of their religious beliefs

Many of these situations resulted in litigation, with the State being sued in Federal Court for violating free speech and religious rights. These cases were resolved, but at what cost?

In reality, Proposal 4 would not protect equality of rights in principle or practice, and a proposal that only pretends to do so should not go before Vermont voters.