

**Fantasy**  
*by Seth Coppens*

Dear a famous transgender teenage journalist,

It was truly surreal moderating the debate with you last night. You and I asked the questions that needed to be asked, and some of them left the two presidential candidates speechless. I cannot imagine a presidential race without the representation of transgender voices! How would voters like us know which candidate to vote for if our questions were never answered by the candidates? How would we possibly call our government a representative democracy if over one million Americans<sup>1</sup> are left out of the debate?

As a tribute to Trans History Month, I would like to collaborate on an article with you about the debate and more specifically presidential candidates Senator Sanders' and Vice President Biden's response to a question I asked: "How will you, as President of the United States, conserve the rights of transgender Americans, following the discrimination posed by the Trump Administration?" This question is very important to me because I remember how scared I was when the Trump Administration was working to actually redefine gender as being what is written on one's birth certificate<sup>2</sup>. This would've lead to the erasure of the identities of millions of transgender Americans as well as their rights. Almost a month ago, Governor Little of Idaho tried to sign *two* anti-trans bills into law<sup>3</sup>, HB500 "Fairness in Women's Sports Act"<sup>4</sup> and HB509 "Vital Statistics"<sup>5</sup>. Governor Little was prevented from signing the bills by the protests of thousands of transgender Idaho teenagers. The protesters' nays severely overruled the ayes of the House and Senate, and so the bills were abolished.

Vice President Biden's response to the question did not specifically address transgender rights: "With the Equality Act<sup>6</sup>, I will protect the LGBTQ people from discrimination and violence, I will support LGBTQ youth, and I will expand access to high quality healthcare for LGBTQ individuals. With the Biden Foundation, I created the campaign 'As You Are'<sup>7</sup> to

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<sup>1</sup>Meerwijk, Esther L., and Jae Sevelius. "Transgender Population Size in the United States: A Meta-Regression of Population-Based Probability Samples." PubMed Central (PMC), 1 Feb. 2017, [www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5227946](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5227946).

<sup>2</sup>Green, Erica. "'Transgender' Could Be Defined Out of Existence Under Trump Administration." <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/21/us/politics/transgender-trump-administration-sex-definition.html>.

<sup>3</sup>"Idaho Governor Signs into Law Anti-Transgender Legislation." NBC News, 31 Mar. 2020, [www.nbcnews.com/feature/nbc-out/idaho-governor-signs-law-anti-transgender-legislation-n1172886](http://www.nbcnews.com/feature/nbc-out/idaho-governor-signs-law-anti-transgender-legislation-n1172886).

<sup>4</sup>"HOUSE BILL 500 – Idaho State Legislature." Idaho State Legislature, [legislature.idaho.gov/sessioninfo/2020/legislation/h0500](http://legislature.idaho.gov/sessioninfo/2020/legislation/h0500).

<sup>5</sup>"HOUSE BILL 509 – Idaho State Legislature." Idaho State Legislature, [legislature.idaho.gov/sessioninfo/2020/legislation/h0509](http://legislature.idaho.gov/sessioninfo/2020/legislation/h0509).

<sup>6</sup>"H.R.5 - 116th Congress (2019-2020): Equality Act." Congress.Gov | Library of Congress, [www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/5](http://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/5).

<sup>7</sup>"As You Are -." Biden Foundation, 15 May 2019, [archive.bidenfoundation.org/pillars/equality/asyouare](http://archive.bidenfoundation.org/pillars/equality/asyouare).

promote family acceptance of LGBTQ youth. I will work to bring the efforts and objectives of 'As You Are' into my presidency." Senator Sanders' response to the question was relevant to the Idaho kerfuffle, and almost undermined Vice President Biden's response to the prompt: "The Trump Administration along with many federal and state lawmakers have completely disregarded anti-discrimination laws, including the Equality Act. Their actions have shown that the Equality Act is not enough to protect the rights of transgender Americans and other LGBTQ Americans. As President of the United States, I will reinforce the Equality Act to ensure that transgender rights are not targeted by state or federal lawmakers, and to stop the injustice being done to transgender Americans. Donald Trump's and Brad Little's efforts to divide us will not succeed when I am president."

Without having transgender teenage journalist moderators, there would not be a clear representation of transgender rights in the presidential debate, and I would be lost as a transgender American and as a journalist.

Sincerely,

Another famous transgender teenage journalist