

Kaiden Keys

11th grade

Digitally Manipulated Painting

Pocono Mountain West High School

Mrs. Miele-Beatty

A “More Perfect Union” to me, is one where we can all accept and express our gender identity without fear of harassment, violence, or marginalization. For years, I was denied access to socially transition and it impacted me not only mentally, but physically as well. My painting is a representation of gender identity and how gender dysphoria tears away at transgender individuals.

Laws are evolving to be more inclusive as time goes on. As of April 11, 2022, when completing passport applications, Americans will be allowed to choose an “X” for their gender and select their sex on Social Security cards. These measures were taken by the Biden Administration to prevent discrimination against transgender Americans in response to state laws targeting them. On August 8th, 2016 the Pennsylvania Department of Health began allowing individuals the ability to change their gender marker on legal documents. On July 21, 2014, President Obama signed Executive Order 13672, adding "gender identity" to the categories protected against discrimination. These laws, amongst others, signify that times are changing in the right direction for the transgender community within our state and country.

