

My toddler says she wants us to repeal hb2 so I can change her diaper

But because public bathrooms are the battlefields where the fight against discrimination has long been waged, more of us are becoming aware of the greater impact bathroom laws are playing in this country's struggle for equal rights. For this reason we should press for acceptance for those who cross gender lines when using bathrooms, an act now subject to legal prosecution after politicians recently passed North Carolina's [Public Facilities Privacy & Security Act](#), commonly known as House Bill 2 or HB2. Simply put, the new law is discriminatory, counterproductive and ridiculous.

I sometimes identify as a woman when using public bathrooms and the reason why shouldn't surprise parents.

In my case, as is the case with most others receiving criticism for using unassigned bathrooms, being transgender is independent of sexual orientation because I do not identify the choice to use the bathroom based on being heterosexual, homosexual or bisexual. Sexual orientation is beside the point. As a father I identify with the gender that practically and emotionally suits my needs at the time I use a public bathroom. I admit the way I use the bathroom is not always typical. I frequently go in loudly, crudely and sometimes while stripping off clothes. My toddlers do not do well standing at urinals and urgency often forces the decision to cross gender lines for the simple fact there is only one open bathroom to use. There is also the fact a urinal is useless to these needs, so there's already inconvenience built into most men's public bathrooms as the proportion of urinals to traditional toilets is skewed. Furthermore, many women's public bathroom designs allow for more counter top space, and these women's bathrooms frequently stock more toilet paper and disposal options – all things that may not seem a big deal to others but are tantamount to parents. Changing dresses on my one year-old daughter, for instance, can be a real pain in the neck when there's not enough counter space to set my diaper bag and retrieve accessories for a speedy change.

Repeal HB2 and parents will benefit

When using bathrooms I'm a man who will identify as a woman. What active parent navigating crowded and busy bathroom facilities has never used the other gender's public bathroom in a pinch? But after an officially-dressed worker forced me out of a woman's bathroom in Charlotte, NC where I was changing my toddler, I found myself in the cross hairs of gender discrimination. While the new bathroom laws are supposed to allow for me to assist my children, the spirit of the law does not condone the practice. "You need to use the men's room to do that," she insisted.

Using unassigned bathrooms is not something I do all the time, and it's not something most people

cared about until a few politicians recently brought attention to the practice by calling it dangerous and making it illegal. I told a few friends about the incident after it happened, but my experience seemed inconsequential compared to more important societal issues demanding attention – supporting the #blacklivesmatter movement to help millions of persecuted men and women who must live their lives in fear, for instance, is a much greater cause to get behind than a dad's call for acceptance in women's public bathrooms.

For many modern families gender inequality manifested in the most unlikely of ways when men and women began to take on roles outside traditional gender-assigned child-care responsibilities. Working women know the inequality in pay, the pressure to stay home and the myriad other expectations they're forced to confront when working a job and raising a family. Likewise, men are increasingly feeling social pressures along gender lines, in my case particularly around those who perceive my potty training responsibilities as nontraditional, or even taboo. I have had acquaintances call my diaper bag a purse and a stranger once saw my baby strapped to me in a BabyBjörn and shouted "Sacajawea!". Their discomfort with my lifestyle is duly noted. But like many others who are comfortable with shifting their gender identities while navigating society, I embrace the other gender's world precisely because it offers something different and better than my assigned world, a notional and practical response subject to a lifestyle I didn't necessarily want but one I enjoy nonetheless. In the case of bathrooms I often identify with the opposite gender's assigned facilities because it makes sense to me.

As an active practitioner of public bathroom civil disobedience, I do not speak proudly but I do speak with authority. My bathroom business gets done in ways that transcend traditional gender assignments, and I won't be cowed by fear-mongers who put laws in place because of their misunderstandings of the needs in other people's modern lives. The fact there are laws made against the practice of crossing gender lines to use bathrooms demonstrates that we are operating within a society of people who are not tuned into the needs of their people. These politicians and their supporters should be held to a higher standard and their impractical and discriminatory HB2 law repealed.