



July 29, 2019

United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator:

On behalf of our 1.5 million supporters nationwide, People For the American Way opposes the nomination of Stephanie L. Haines, of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Pennsylvania. In her hearing testimony, Haines gave a disturbing response to a question relating to the dignity of transgender people.

In his written questions to the nominee, Sen. Booker asked a simple, straightforward question:

Would you honor the request of a plaintiff, defendant, or witness in your courtroom who is transgender to be referred to in accordance with their gender identity?

Instead of saying yes, Haines dissembled:

If I am confirmed, all persons that come into my courtroom will be treated fairly, respectfully, and equally.<sup>i</sup>

This was not a trick question. Showing basic respect for those who appear in your courtroom does not signal how you would rule on any particular legal issue. Others of President Trump's nominees have answered the same question with an unqualified "yes," including ones nominated to district courts in Pennsylvania.<sup>ii iii</sup>

It is difficult to imagine the public accepting as unbiased a ruling against a transgender litigant (or someone represented by a transgender attorney) when the judge cannot commit herself to showing even minimal courtesy toward transgender people.

Stephanie Haines should not be confirmed to a lifetime position on the federal bench. We urge senators to oppose her nomination.

Sincerely,

Marge Baker  
Executive Vice President for Policy and Program

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<sup>i</sup> Stephanie Lou Haines, nominee for the Western District of Pennsylvania, Questions for the Record, <https://www.judiciary.senate.gov/download/haines-responses-to-questions-for-the-record>, pp. 6-7.

<sup>ii</sup> Jennifer Philpott Wilson, nominee for the Middle District of Pennsylvania, Questions for the Record, <https://www.judiciary.senate.gov/download/06/17/2019/wilson-responses-to-questions-for-the-record>, p. 30.

<sup>iii</sup> William Shaw Stickman IV, nominee for the Western District of Pennsylvania, Questions for the Record, <https://www.judiciary.senate.gov/download/06/17/2019/stickman-responses-to-questions-for-the-record>, p. 31.