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Renuka Chowdhury, INC (Telangana) — Opposed

She began by grounding her argument in the Constitution and existing legal framework, stating that transgender rights are already recognized and that this is **“कोई नई बात नहीं... इसमें नालसा कानून बना हुआ था.”** She referenced the Prime Minister’s own remark about being “non-biological” to argue that identity beyond binaries is already acknowledged, questioning why a new law is needed.

She then shifted to examples showing transgender inclusion in society, stating that transgender persons are present in the judiciary, police, and sports, and have brought recognition to the country. She questioned the need for new legislation when acceptance already exists, arguing that the issue is not existence but discrimination.

She moved to criticize the government’s approach, accusing it of rolling back existing recognition. She argued that the government had already given identity documents like Aadhaar and now appears to be reversing that, comparing it to removing people from voter lists and saying this reflects a pattern of taking away rights already granted.

She then brought in a social argument, describing how families struggle to accept transgender children due to stigma, leading many to leave home. She emphasized that community networks provide shelter and support to such individuals and warned that the bill risks disrupting these support systems.

She strongly opposed the introduction of medical control and removal of self-identification, questioning the authority of the state to define identity. She argued that identity is personal and said the bill allows the state to override it, while also raising concerns about privacy violations through mandatory reporting of gender-affirming procedures.

She then shifted to governance criticism, contrasting the urgency of this bill with failures in addressing serious crimes like sexual violence, stating that justice in such cases is delayed for years. She questioned why the government is prioritizing this bill instead.

She framed the bill politically as targeting a very small population, arguing that around five lakh transgender persons are being singled out unnecessarily, and accused the government of bringing the law out of fear of misuse rather than genuine concern.

She questioned implementation feasibility, especially regarding medical boards, asking where such infrastructure would come from and whether the system can realistically handle it. Drawing

from her experience as a former health minister, she argued that identity is not purely biological but also psychological and social.

She brought in cultural examples, particularly from Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, where transgender persons are invited to weddings and considered auspicious, arguing that society already recognizes and respects them in certain contexts.

She criticized the bill's definitions and exclusions, particularly around sexual orientation and self-perceived identity, and questioned how the state can decide who qualifies as transgender. She also linked this to broader issues like the lack of recognition of same-sex marriage, arguing that the government avoids complex identity issues.

She accused the bill of criminalizing transgender persons by default and warned that it reinforces societal prejudice and violence. She also pointed out the lack of consultation with stakeholders and said the government should have engaged in dialogue before introducing such legislation.

In conclusion, she urged the government to withdraw the bill or send it to a select committee, calling on members to show courage and stand for dignity and humanity. She framed the issue as a moral test, invoking Gandhi's idea that truth remains truth even if held by a minority, and warned that Parliament would be accountable for the consequences of this law.

Tiruchi Siva, DMK (Tamil Nadu) — Opposed

He began by explaining why he had insisted on speaking, saying the subject was important enough for him to intervene despite time constraints. He opened with a strong emotional position, stating he stood with “agony and anguish” and that “once again, injustice is done to the transgender community.”

He then immediately moved to a constitutional argument, stating that even if the bill is passed by majority, it violates Articles 14, 15, 19, and 21 by taking away rights to freedom, dignity, privacy, and self-determination. He questioned why the government is bringing such legislation and suggested a pattern of introducing laws despite judicial positions.

He followed this by highlighting the current social reality, stating that transgender persons are already abused and discriminated against in everyday life, and argued that the bill would worsen their condition rather than improve it.

He then shifted to a historical and legislative recount. He said that in 2014 an expert committee was formed and the NALSA case was ongoing, and at the same time he introduced a private member’s bill on transgender rights. He emphasized that this bill was comprehensive and included provisions like a national commission, fast-track mechanisms, and reservation in education and employment.

He then brought in the role of states and his party, stating that Tamil Nadu under Karunanidhi was the first to establish a transgender welfare board and that other states followed. He argued that since the subject falls under the Concurrent List, the Union government should have consulted states before bringing this amendment, and questioned whether any such consultation with states or stakeholders had taken place.

He then described what happened after his 2014 bill. He said it was debated across sessions and supported widely, including by the ruling party, but was eventually superseded because the government wanted to bring its own legislation. He then traced the evolution of government bills, stating that the 2016 bill created controversy due to its definition of transgender persons, which led to protests and withdrawal after standing committee criticism.

He continued by stating that the 2019 Act itself was a diluted version of his earlier bill, and argued that the current amendment further dilutes even that framework.

He then moved to specific provisions in the present bill. He argued that the bill introduces criminalization and could lead to severe punishments, and warned that it could target community structures like gurus or leaders who provide support to transgender persons.

He raised strong objections to the removal of self-identification, stating that earlier individuals could declare their identity and be recognized, but now that right is being taken away. He questioned why anyone would falsely claim to be transgender and argued that this provision is unjustified.

He then gave a specific example to explain the timing of the bill, referring to a case where a transgender teacher lost her job after disclosure of identity and the courts intervened. He suggested that the bill is being brought to counter such judicial protections.

He also pointed to the growing presence of transgender persons in society, mentioning roles such as police officers, principals, and other professions, to argue that the community is progressing and should be supported rather than restricted.

He returned to his core argument, stating that the bill removes self-identification, introduces criminalization, and undermines constitutional rights. He framed himself as speaking on behalf of a voiceless community outside Parliament.

In conclusion, he urged the government to withdraw the bill or refer it to a select committee, calling for consultation with stakeholders, legal experts, and the transgender community before bringing any revised legislation.

Dr. Medha Vishram Kulkarni, BJP (Maharashtra) — Supported

She began by supporting the bill and said the government under Prime Minister Modi has brought this amendment so that the correct beneficiaries receive benefits. She said the bill provides justice, dignity, identity, and protection to transgender persons and thanked the Prime Minister and the minister.

She then said the bill focuses on three things: identity, authority for certification, and punishment. She referred to census data of around 4.87 lakh transgender persons and said the number could be higher. She said male-to-female persons are more visible while female-to-male identities are less publicly recorded.

She then said that when she looked at state-wise numbers like Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Bihar, and West Bengal, she felt that such distribution raises questions. She said nature is random and not based on geography or religion, and therefore asked whether there is human intervention, pressure, or influence in some cases.

She then said that she has seen many people at signals and public places dressed as transgender persons. She said she followed up and found that during the day they earn money at signals and at night they go home, have families, count money, drink alcohol, and smoke cigarettes. Based on this, she said there should be a system to identify genuine transgender persons and take action against fake identities.

She also said that children may be forced into begging or pushed into transgender identity and that such cases should be investigated and punished. She said the amendment is brought to ensure that real transgender persons get benefits and misuse is prevented.

She then said the definition in the bill includes traditional identities like hijra, kinnar, aravani, jogta, and eunuch, and therefore these groups are covered.

She then spoke about certification and said that identity should be verified by a medical board headed by a chief medical officer and then certified by a district magistrate. She said this is logical. She also said that making it mandatory to report gender change surgeries will help collect data for the future.

She then spoke about punishment and said earlier punishments were low but now stricter provisions are introduced, including long-term imprisonment and fines. She said this will reduce crimes and protect transgender persons.

At the end, she responded to Renuka Chowdhury's statement about the Prime Minister calling himself "non-biological" and said this is not what he meant and that his statement has been twisted.

She then said that in Parliament names like Modi, Gandhi, and Guruji are repeatedly brought up. She questioned why, if Gandhi's name is taken, then certain things are not examined, and

she asked why there was no postmortem in that context. She said that if such references are made, then those matters should also be discussed.

She ended by thanking the Chair and supporting the bill.

Saket Gokhale, AITC (West Bengal) — Opposed

He began by saying this issue should go beyond political differences and stated that the discussion is not just about the transgender community but about what the country understands. He said Parliament must listen and learn, and added that there is a perception that the government and Parliament have lost connection with people.

He then immediately responded to a previous speaker, objecting to the use of “third gender” and said clearly that a trans man is a man and a trans woman is a woman.

He then shifted to criticizing how the government makes laws, stating that it does not listen to affected people. He brought in an international reference, saying the government follows trends like in the US and mentioned Donald Trump, arguing that if such ideas are promoted there, the government here adopts them. He called the bill “a colonial legislation.”

He then moved to data, stating that out of around 5 lakh transgender persons (2011 Census), only about 32,000 have obtained identity certificates. He asked why, and answered that it is difficult for people to come out, and said the bill will push them further back and take away their identity.

He then made a political argument, stating that transgender persons are not a “vote bank,” and said that is why they are ignored and their rights can be taken away without consequence.

He then introduced statistics on mental health, stating that 31% of transgender persons have attempted suicide and that 50% of those attempts happen before the age of 20. He said this is due to discrimination, not identity, and argued that the bill adds further pressure.

He then gave an international comparison, stating that in the US, after anti-trans laws were passed, suicide attempts increased by 72%.

He then shifted to examples, mentioning Tiruchi Siva’s earlier work and said it led to positive change. He also cited a case from West Bengal of a transgender person becoming a college principal. He then quoted his party’s manifesto commitment to working with transgender and queer communities.

He returned to constitutional arguments, stating that Parliament cannot override principles already interpreted by the Supreme Court, especially in the NALSA judgment. He referred to the Court’s preference for psychological over biological determination of gender.

He then broadened the argument to government overreach, stating that the government is deciding religion, food, relationships, and now gender. He said the bill allows gender to be decided by a medical officer and district magistrate and questioned their qualifications.

He then raised process-related concerns, stating that the bill was rushed. He described that four hours were initially allocated, but the parliamentary affairs minister intervened and pushed for passing the bill instead of debating it. He said the intent was to pass, not discuss.

He then raised the issue of lack of consultation, stating that even the National Council for Transgender Persons was not consulted. He claimed that when members approached the ministry, they were told consultation was not needed because the bill had already been introduced.

He then warned that the bill will be challenged in the Supreme Court and likely struck down, and criticized the cycle of passing laws that are later overturned.

In conclusion, he said this is a matter of constitutional morality and urged members to decide whether they want to stand by the Constitution. He ended by saying that history will not forgive the House if the bill is passed without proper consultation and scrutiny.

Sanjay Singh, AAP (Delhi) — Opposed

He began by stating that he opposed the bill and demanded that it be sent to a select committee. He said this is necessary because the people for whom the bill is being made should at least be heard, and their feelings, views, and concerns should be understood. He also said experts should be consulted before bringing such a law.

He then referred to Tiruchi Siva's earlier private member's bill, saying that after 45 years such a bill was passed in the Rajya Sabha, and said the House should have been proud of it. He stated that it was later overturned in the Lok Sabha and replaced with the 2019 Act, and now the government is again bringing changes.

He then gave a cultural example from the Ramayana, stating that when Lord Ram went into exile, he asked men and women to return but did not ask the kinnar community to leave, and they waited there. He said that when Ram returned, they were blessed, and argued that this community has always been respected in Indian tradition. He said the government is now betraying that same community.

He then shifted to government performance and cited budget figures. He said that in 2021–22, ₹20 crore was allocated for transgender welfare but only about ₹1.9 crore was spent. He then gave figures for subsequent years, saying ₹30 crore was allocated but only a very small portion was spent, and in 2023–24 around ₹52.91 crore was allocated but only about ₹6.59 crore was spent. He continued with another year's figures, stating that only a small percentage of allocated funds was actually utilized. He said this shows failure and accused the government of betraying the community.

He then gave examples of individuals from the transgender community who have achieved positions, including Lakshmi Narayan Tripathi representing India at the UN, a transgender MLA from Madhya Pradesh, a mayor from Gorakhpur, and a college principal. He used these examples to show that the community is capable and progressing.

He then expanded into a broader political attack, accusing the government of betraying multiple groups, including youth and farmers, and referred to past issues like farm laws, demonetization, and COVID hardships. He used this to argue that the government is repeating the same pattern with transgender persons.

He then returned to the bill and said that under this law, transgender persons will have to stand in line, be examined, and face verification to prove their identity, which he described as humiliation.

He then directly responded to remarks made by ruling party members about transgender persons drinking or smoking. He questioned this, asking whether members of the ruling party themselves do not drink or smoke, and challenged the double standard.

In conclusion, he said that transgender persons should be respected and not insulted in Parliament, and reiterated his demand that the bill be sent to a select committee after proper consultation with the community.

Golla Baburao, YSRCP (Andhra Pradesh) — Opposed (with request for review)

He began by saying it is a “very sad opportunity” to speak on this issue and described transgender persons as one of the most socially affected groups. He said their lives are “mysterious, miserable,” and extremely difficult, and stated that many are thrown out of their families and end up living on roads and begging.

He then moved to his main demand, urging the Union government to send the bill to a select committee so that proper consultation can take place with stakeholders and other sections of society before proceeding further.

He referred to the Supreme Court’s NALSA judgment and said it clearly affirmed the right to self-identification as a fundamental right under Article 21. He stated that removal of self-identification in the bill directly conflicts with this judgment and asked the government how such a provision would survive constitutional scrutiny.

He then raised concerns about the role of medical boards. He said making medical boards the authority for identity certification creates practical and ethical problems, especially for transgender persons in rural and remote areas who would have to go through multiple levels of verification. He also said that identity is a deeply personal matter and should not be treated as a medical issue, and warned that this approach may create barriers instead of enabling recognition.

He then addressed the provision on mandatory reporting of gender-affirming procedures, stating that requiring hospitals to report such cases to the government violates privacy. He referred to the right to privacy established by the Supreme Court and said that doctor-patient confidentiality should be maintained. He warned that such provisions could expose individuals to harassment and surveillance.

He then clarified his party’s position, stating that YSRCP supports structured frameworks to prevent misuse, but safeguards should not become barriers for genuine transgender persons seeking recognition and support.

He then outlined suggestions, including the need for detailed parliamentary scrutiny, making medical processes more flexible, and ensuring sensitivity in implementation.

In conclusion, he said the 2019 Act was an important step forward even if it had limitations, but the present amendment raises concerns about reversing progress. He again requested that the bill be referred to a select committee for further deliberation and reconsideration.

Shubhashish Khuntia, BJD (Odisha) — Mixed / Suggested caution

He began by stating that the issue is very sensitive and should not be seen only from an administrative perspective but also from a humanitarian and constitutional point of view. He referred to the idea of *Ardhanarishvara* and **said transgender persons are traditionally respected, and people take their blessings during शुभ occasions.**

He then connected this to constitutional values, stating that the country belongs to everyone and everyone has equal rights. He emphasized that empowerment should not come from sympathy but from opportunity and trust.

He then moved to the bill and said that while its objectives may be general or acceptable, it must be ensured that the process guarantees freedom and dignity. He said if the intention is truly to empower transgender persons, then the law should strengthen them rather than create difficulties.

He gave examples from Odisha, stating that transgender persons have been included in self-help groups and municipal work, including roles in parking management and local services. He used this to show that inclusion is possible through practical measures.

He then suggested that before making amendments, the focus should be on protecting rights and reflecting social values. He emphasized that laws should be made by taking all stakeholders along and considering their perspectives.

In conclusion, he said that any amendment should ensure dignity, inclusion, and balance between law and social realities, and thanked the Chair.

Prof. Manoj Kumar Jha, RJD (Bihar) — Opposed

He began by stating that there is a “fundamental difference between legislative majority and moral majority,” and said the government relies on legislative majority but ignores moral legitimacy. He suggested that this pattern is visible across multiple bills.

He then shifted to a broader philosophical framing, referring to thinkers like George Orwell and Michel Foucault, and said ideas like “visibility is a trap” are relevant to understanding how laws operate. He argued that many members in the House carry deep-rooted biases against the transgender community, and said unless these biases are addressed, honest analysis is not possible.

He then acknowledged people from his personal and academic life who helped expand his understanding of the issue. He referred to a recent event at the Press Club where members of the transgender community spoke, and shared an example from that discussion. He said one person described being born male but feeling like a woman internally, and asked who can medically determine such inner identity. He used this to argue against medicalization.

He then said that identity should not be confined to files and certificates and should not be placed under bureaucratic control. He pointed out that district officials are already overburdened and questioned adding more responsibilities related to identity certification.

He criticized the approach of the bill, saying it reflects a majoritarian perspective and undermines rights-based thinking. He also pointed out that families themselves can be sites of rejection and violence, and said the bill does not address these realities.

He reiterated his opposition to medicalization, stating that identity cannot be reduced to medical categories. He also emphasized that laws are being made for people who are not present in the House and who were not consulted, and said stakeholder consultation has not taken place.

He then referred to constitutional provisions under Articles 14, 19, and 21, and also mentioned the Puttaswamy judgment on privacy, stating that personal identity and privacy are protected rights.

He introduced the concept of intersectionality, explaining that identity is shaped not only by gender but also by caste, community, and economic background, and said these overlapping factors must be considered.

He then referred to international principles like the Yogyakarta Principles, stating that they emphasize identity, bodily autonomy, and non-discrimination.

In conclusion, he urged the government to move away from what he described as focusing on “low hanging fruit,” and instead send the bill for wider consultation so that the transgender community can have confidence in the process.

Dr. M. Thambidurai, AIADMK (Tamil Nadu) — Supported (with suggestions)

He began by stating that his party supports the objective of the bill, saying it aims to ensure dignity, safety, and protection for transgender persons who have historically faced discrimination, exclusion, and stigma. He added that any legislation in this area must balance protection of rights with clarity and limits.

He then highlighted that the bill introduces stringent punishment for crimes against transgender persons and presented this as a positive step.

He then shifted into a political argument, questioning opposition parties, especially the Congress-led UPA government. He said that during their time, no law was introduced, no welfare scheme was created, and no central institutional framework was established specifically for transgender welfare. He said that even the expert committee was formed only at a very late stage, and questioned why such steps were not taken earlier. He contrasted this with the NDA government, saying that it has taken initiative by bringing legislation and strengthening provisions.

He then expressed appreciation for Prime Minister Modi, stating that the government not only brought the law but is now strengthening it through amendments. He questioned why those who did not act earlier are now opposing the bill.

He then moved to implementation concerns, stating that law alone cannot bring change and that awareness, sensitization, and accountability are necessary at all levels, including police and society.

He then listed areas where further work is needed, including education and skill development for transgender persons, reservation and affirmative action in jobs and education, access to healthcare including mental health, and social security measures for vulnerable groups. He said these are important alongside the law.

He then addressed opposition demands to send the bill to a standing committee and said he does not agree with repeatedly referring bills to committees, implying that the process should move forward.

He concluded by saying that while concerns raised by opposition members can be considered and incorporated, the bill itself should not be opposed, and reaffirmed his support for it.

Ravi Chandra Vaddiraju, BRS (Telangana) — Mixed

He began by stating that transgender rights are not just about law or policy but about **respect, dignity, and equal rights**. He said India has a long history of recognizing gender diversity, mentioning communities like hijras and kinnars, but added that discrimination and hardship still exist in daily life.

He then referred to the 2019 Act, calling it an important step that provided legal recognition and protection. He then introduced the 2026 amendment and said that while some changes are positive, others raise concerns.

He first addressed the **definition**, saying the earlier law had a broader and inclusive definition, but the amendment removes that and lists only certain categories, excluding some identities. He raised the question of whether identity should be decided by the individual or by the system and said identity is personal.

He then moved to the **certification process**, explaining that under the bill a transgender person must apply and get certification based on a medical board recommendation. He said this creates structure but also adds medical and administrative steps to a personal matter. He said many believe self-identification should be enough.

He then pointed out that the bill requires a revised certificate after gender-affirming surgery and that medical institutions must report such cases. He said this raises concerns about privacy and unnecessary intrusion.

He then shifted to the **penal provisions**, saying the bill introduces strict punishment for serious crimes such as forcing someone into transgender identity, kidnapping, causing harm, or bonded labour. He described this as a positive step and said it shows the seriousness of such offences.

He then brought in a **state perspective from Telangana**, mentioning welfare measures under KCR such as pensions, financial assistance, and steps toward social recognition. He said despite this, transgender persons still face problems in employment, healthcare, and education, and that social discrimination remains a major issue.

He then emphasized the need for better implementation, skill development, and awareness, stating that change in society depends on changing attitudes.

In conclusion, he said the bill is an important step but must remain inclusive and fair, and should empower people rather than create barriers. He framed the issue as not just about transgender rights but about human rights.

Dr. John Brittas, CPI(M) (Kerala) — Opposed

He began by calling the bill “**a black... step backward dragging us a full century into the past**” and said that while other countries are moving forward, India is going backward with restrictive measures.

He then referred to the Prime Minister’s earlier statement that the existing law was a “shield of living with dignity” and questioned why it is being changed now, asking what has suddenly changed and what prompted the government to bring this bill.

He then suggested two reasons: first, that something is being imposed on the country, and second, that the government is using its majority to override institutions, including the Supreme Court. He said there is no concern for Supreme Court judgments and asked what happened to the recommendations of a Supreme Court-appointed committee.

He then moved to the core issue of identity, saying the bill shifts from self-identification to “**forced medical intervention,**” and questioned whether people should be subjected to such procedures. He said this violates privacy and dignity.

He then raised concerns about the scale of impact, referring to the number of transgender persons and asking whether all of them would now be forced into such processes.

He then brought in the example of Kerala, saying the state provides pensions, employment, housing, education, and healthcare support to transgender persons, and asked the minister to look at these policies instead of proceeding with the bill.

He then broadened the argument, saying the bill is part of a larger pattern targeting certain sections of society and referred to issues of plurality and cultural debates, including films like *The Kerala Story*, to suggest a wider social context.

He then returned to constitutional arguments, stating that the bill violates Articles 14, 15, 16, and 19 and goes against Supreme Court judgments. He said the bill is being rushed and “bulldozed” without proper consideration.

He then raised the issue of lack of consultation, stating that stakeholders and members of the transgender community were not consulted and that Parliament cannot legislate on people’s lives without taking them into confidence.

He also criticized statements suggesting that Parliament can override judicial review, arguing that this goes against the principle of separation of powers and constitutional governance.

In conclusion, he said the bill is regressive and warned that it could provoke anger from the community. He urged the government to either withdraw the bill or send it to a select committee for further consideration.

Jaya Amitabh Bachchan, SP (Uttar Pradesh) — Opposed

She began by associating herself with all speakers from her side opposing the bill and extended greetings on Ram Navami. She also raised procedural concerns about interruptions and time allocation in the House, saying some members are not being heard properly.

She then moved to the issue and said the transgender community has traditionally been respected and linked this to mythology. She referred to the Ramayana example mentioned earlier, saying the community has been blessed and is invited at शुभ occasions like childbirth, where their presence and blessings are considered auspicious. She also said people avoid their curse, showing the belief in their power.

She then added that in earlier times, during the era of kings, transgender persons were kept in royal households to protect women and were considered safe. She contrasted this with the present, saying the government is now treating them as unsafe and questioned this change.

She then questioned the timing of the bill, asking what the urgency is when there are many other important issues like economic and financial matters that need attention. She argued that such a sensitive issue should be examined carefully and not rushed.

She then said that representatives from the transgender community should be brought into the House, their concerns should be heard, and only then should such legislation be framed.

She then raised concerns about parliamentary process, noting that earlier a higher proportion of bills were sent to committees, but now fewer are being referred. She questioned whether the House is moving away from detailed legislative scrutiny and whether that weakens the parliamentary system.

She then directly addressed the bill, stating that it removes the right to self-determination and violates the NALSA judgment and constitutional rights under Articles 14, 19, and 21. She questioned whether the House is strengthening or weakening constitutional values of equality, dignity, and justice.

She then described the bill as insensitive and raised a broader point that minorities are not only religious but also social, and said the transgender community is one such group.

She questioned whether the bill is being brought for constitutional reasons or for political considerations such as upcoming elections.

In conclusion, she stated that legislation should protect rather than exclude, described the bill as discriminatory and inhumane, and requested that it be withdrawn or sent for further examination.

Abdul Wahab, IUML (Kerala) — Opposed

He began by stating that his party completely opposes the bill. He said transgender persons are visible in cities like Delhi and Mumbai and that people see their struggle for existence and survival every day.

He then pointed out that the transgender population is very small compared to the total population of the country, saying it is only around half a million out of 140 crore people. He questioned why the government is focusing on this group in this way and asked what the need is to bring such a bill for such a small population.

He then made a broader point, saying that if justice cannot be ensured for such a small and vulnerable group, then how can other communities expect justice. He specifically mentioned Indian Muslims in this context, linking it to concerns about fairness and equality.

He then questioned the urgency of the bill, asking why it is being brought suddenly and what the motive behind it is. He said he does not understand the purpose and noted that the community is not even a vote bank.

He then referred to the upcoming festival (Ram Navami) and said that the community is usually associated with blessings and social presence, and questioned why the government is not considering their role and position.

In conclusion, he requested the government not to pass the bill using its majority and instead send it to a select committee or standing committee for further deliberation and discussion.

Dr. Bhim Singh, BJP (Bihar) — Supported

He began by stating that the bill has been presented in the House and said transgender persons are part of society and have always had a place in Indian culture and history.

He then directly responded to opposition members, especially Renuka Chowdhury, saying they were shedding “crocodile tears” but did nothing when they were in power. He said the current government has brought the law and is now strengthening it through amendments.

He then brought in historical and mythological references, mentioning the Mahabharata and Arjuna taking the form of Brihannala. He also referred to texts like Manusmriti, Arthashastra, and Kamasutra, saying transgender persons have been mentioned in these traditions and recognized as “tritiya ling” (third gender). He said they had roles in society such as guarding royal spaces and even in intelligence roles.

He then shifted to the need for the amendment, stating that earlier laws under UPA did not classify offences properly and punishment was limited to two years under IPC provisions. He said the amendment now introduces categorization of offences and stronger punishments.

He then gave a specific example, stating that in 2021 in Delhi, a minor boy was allegedly abducted and forcibly made to undergo gender change and pushed into such activities. He used this to justify stricter provisions in the bill.

He then explained the punishment framework, saying that if minors are abducted and forced into such acts, the punishment can go up to life imprisonment, and in other cases up to ten years. He said these provisions are necessary to prevent exploitation.

He then stated that the government’s aim is to remove discrimination based on gender, caste, or region and to implement social justice in real terms.

He then moved to government schemes, saying that multiple initiatives have been introduced for transgender welfare. He mentioned allocation of funds, inclusion under Ayushman Bharat, and the creation of “Garima Greh” shelters, stating that around 147 such facilities have been created. He said these provide housing, training, and livelihood opportunities.

He also said that states like Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, and Madhya Pradesh have taken steps in building such facilities and providing training.

He then added that transgender persons have also been recognized with national awards like Padma Shri under the current government.

In conclusion, he said the amendment strengthens protections and supports the community, and reaffirmed his strong support for the bill. He also suggested that the bill could be given a symbolic name similar to other acts, referring to naming it after Brihannala.

Dr. Sandeep Kumar Pathak, AAP (Punjab) — Opposed

He began by saying he was unsure whether to treat the discussion as serious or express sadness, noting that the original Act came in 2019 and now an amendment has come in 2026. He questioned whether this reflects the government correcting its mistakes or repeatedly bringing deficient legislation.

He then referred to the reasons given by the government for the amendment, saying it was claimed that earlier there were difficulties in defining identity and gaps in social protection. He argued that the current bill also has many shortcomings and suggested this cycle will continue, with the law again being challenged in the Supreme Court and possibly struck down, raising questions about the legislature's ability.

He then said the issue is serious and should be sent to a select committee. He pointed out that this is not a political or electoral issue, since the transgender community is not a vote bank, and questioned why such urgency exists.

He then moved to specific provisions. Referring to Clause 3, he said the bill requires transgender persons to go before a medical board to establish identity and asked why only this community is subjected to such a requirement. He argued that this shows the bill is not protecting rights but diluting them.

He then questioned how a medical board can determine sociocultural and psychological aspects of identity, saying identity is not purely medical. He added that the government itself mentions sociocultural identity but the mechanism cannot assess it.

He then raised the issue of rejected applications, stating that around 5,566 applications for certification have been rejected and asked where those individuals can appeal in a democracy.

He then moved to privacy concerns, referring to Clause 5 and saying that if someone undergoes gender change, hospitals must inform authorities, which he described as a violation of privacy.

He then referred to Clause 7 and said provisions around coercion and responsibility are problematic in a society where even families can be unsafe for individuals. He said such provisions may not account for real-life situations where people seek help.

He emphasized that the issue is not political and said the people affected by the bill must be consulted before passing it.

In conclusion, he reiterated that the bill should be discussed with stakeholders and sent to a select committee before any decision is made.

Sulata Deo, BJD (Odisha) — Opposed

She began directly by questioning the urgency of the bill, saying that at a time when there are larger issues and even war-like situations, bringing such a bill “overnight” is questionable. She asked why MPs are not subjected to such identity verification and why transgender persons are being treated differently.

She then questioned whether transgender persons choose to be born that way and said they do not, asking members to imagine living their lives to understand their struggles. She referred to cultural practices where transgender persons are considered auspicious and invited for blessings, and questioned what has changed now.

She then raised a moral argument, saying that even a person sentenced to death is asked their last wish, but transgender persons are not even being asked what they want. She said their consent and voice are being ignored.

She emphasized that the real issue lies in society’s mindset and said that attitudes toward transgender persons need to change rather than imposing restrictive laws.

She then stated that she opposes the bill and demanded that it be sent to a select committee or JPC for further discussion.

She then gave examples from Odisha, mentioning that under Naveen Patnaik, transgender persons were given food security support and representation, including inclusion in councils. She said if the intention is to help, then such welfare measures should be strengthened instead of bringing restrictive provisions.

She then made a rhetorical point, saying that while the Prime Minister speaks his “mann ki baat,” transgender persons should also be allowed to express their own voice, and questioned why they are being silenced.

She then appealed to the minister, asking that transgender persons be allowed to live their lives with dignity and not be pushed down further.

She also referred to real-life hardship, mentioning seeing transgender persons at traffic signals and recalling a recent murder of a transgender person in Odisha, using this to highlight vulnerability.

In conclusion, she said transgender persons have the right to live with dignity and requested that the bill be sent to a committee for detailed discussion and reconsideration in a later session.

Dr. Fauzia Khan, NCP-SCP (Maharashtra) — Opposed

She began by saying that while concerns about misuse may be valid, the issue is extremely sensitive and requires balance. She warned that if balance is not maintained, it would lead to injustice against genuine transgender persons and said that fears should not override constitutional rights.

She then stated that the duty of the government is to protect transgender persons from abuse, violence, social deprivation, shame, and indignity.

She then presented data, stating that as per the 2011 Census around 4.88 lakh transgender persons were identified, but only about 35,000 identity cards have been issued so far. She added that around ₹70 crore is allocated annually for their welfare, but only about 11% of that is actually utilized, and said this reflects the level of seriousness and empathy in implementation.

She then raised a social question, asking why transgender persons are still forced to beg at traffic signals and places of worship. She argued that development slogans should not be selective and said that instead of this situation, there should be rehabilitation, housing, education, and integration into mainstream society.

She then demanded that the bill be sent to a select committee.

She then referred to Tiruchi Siva's private member's bill, which had been passed unanimously, and questioned why such bills are later reversed. She raised a broader concern about the relevance of private member's business, suggesting that such efforts often get nullified.

She then moved into a reflection on parliamentary functioning, saying important issues are discussed but suggestions are not acknowledged. She said she has raised issues multiple times but has not received recognition for them.

She then said that debates should not be driven by electoral considerations and that Parliament should function meaningfully rather than through an "election lens."

In conclusion, she appealed to the House to ensure meaningful debate and decision-making and reiterated her opposition to the bill.

Dr. Parmar Jashvantsinh Salamsinh, BJP (Gujarat) — Supported

He began by saying he was speaking in two capacities, as a Member of Parliament and as a doctor, and said both perspectives guide his support for the bill.

He first praised the government and Prime Minister Modi, citing examples of transgender persons receiving Padma awards to show recognition and sensitivity.

He then moved into explaining terminology. He described categories like intersex, cisgender, and transgender from a medical perspective, explaining how sex is assigned at birth and how identity may differ later. He clarified that the debate is not about whether transgender persons deserve protection, but about **how protection should be given and to whom**.

He then made a distinction between personal identity and state recognition. He said that how a person feels about themselves is a personal and social matter, and that the state has no role in defining that. He said individuals have full freedom in their personal life, expression, and identity, and that the Constitution protects that space.

He then shifted to the role of the state, saying that when a person seeks certification, reservation, or welfare benefits, they move from a personal domain to a public administrative domain. He argued that in this domain, verification is required and the state cannot rely only on self-declaration.

He then compared this to other systems, stating that for caste certificates, income-based benefits, and disability benefits, verification is required through competent authorities and medical boards. He said similar principles should apply here.

He then addressed concerns about self-identification, saying the 2019 Act had intention but lacked a structured mechanism, and that the amendment provides that structure. He said the amendment gives “spine” to the earlier law.

He then clarified that personal identity and expression remain untouched by the bill, and said the state is not entering personal or social spaces, but only regulating access to formal benefits.

He then discussed the definition, stating that removing categories like gender fluid or self-perceived identities from legal definition is necessary because such internal feelings cannot be verified by any authority. He said including them creates a situation where rights are promised but cannot be implemented.

He then explained that the new definition includes persons with congenital variations in sex characteristics and traditional communities like hijra, kinnar, aravani, and jogta. He said this gives legal recognition to groups that were earlier outside formal systems.

He then moved to penal provisions, stating that earlier punishment was limited to two years but now stronger provisions are introduced. He said kidnapping or forcing someone into

transgender identity can attract up to ten years' imprisonment, and in the case of minors, even life imprisonment.

He then argued that verification is not denial of rights but a way to ensure proper implementation. He compared the medical board process to how doctors certify sex at birth, saying it is a professional and verifiable act.

In conclusion, he said the bill does not interfere in personal identity or social life but only ensures that when state benefits are involved, there is a verifiable basis. He reaffirmed his support for the bill.

Priyanka Chaturvedi, Shiv Sena (UBT) (Maharashtra) — Opposed

She began by clearly stating that she stood to reject and withdraw the amendment bill, calling it an “inhuman bill” and saying it should be taken back immediately.

She then raised the issue of consultation, pointing out that around 5 lakh transgender persons (as per the 2011 Census) are being affected by this decision, yet there has been no multi-stakeholder consultation or discussion with the community. She said decisions affecting such a large group cannot be taken without engaging them and compared it to internal party decisions being taken by a few people.

She then referred to the 2019 Act and the NALSA judgment, stating that the Supreme Court had recognized transgender rights under Articles 14, 15, 19, and 21. She said the amendment goes against these principles.

She then focused on self-identification, stating that India was among countries like Denmark, Iceland, Malta, Norway, Luxembourg, and Portugal that recognized self-identification, but now this right is being taken away.

She then referred to implementation issues, stating that around 35,000 people have obtained identity certificates while 5,566 applications have been rejected. She questioned on what basis these rejections happened and said there was no proper grievance redressal mechanism even under the earlier law.

She then raised concerns about the proposed medical board system, saying that it will lead to further rejections without clarity on the criteria, and that it undermines dignity and rights under Article 21.

She then brought in a cultural example, referring to the Kinnar Akhada at the Kumbh Mela, saying it was one of the most prominent and widely recognized groups, to argue that society acknowledges and respects the community in many spaces.

She then said that when talking about respect, Parliament cannot take away rights, and instead has a responsibility to strengthen them.

In conclusion, she demanded that the amendment be rejected or sent to a select committee, and reiterated that removal of self-identification must be withdrawn.

Subhash Barala, BJP (Haryana) — Supported

He began by stating that the amendment bill strengthens the 2019 Act and is based on administrative experience gained since its implementation. He said the purpose is to make the earlier law more effective.

He then emphasized cultural context, stating that in Indian tradition the kinnar community has always been respected and invited on auspicious occasions such as weddings and childbirth. He referred to traditions like Koovagam and Ardhanarishvara worship and said Indian society views this community with respect.

He then brought in historical and mythological examples, referring to the Mahabharata and Arjuna's role during exile, and the Ramayana story where kinnars waited for Lord Ram and were later blessed. He said these traditions show their long-standing place in society.

He also referred to the Kumbh Mela, saying that recognition has been given to the kinnar akhada and that such inclusion reflects their accepted role in society.

He then contrasted Indian traditions with references made by other members to foreign laws, saying that India's approach is based on human values rooted in its own culture.

He then shifted to a political argument, stating that previous governments did not focus on this community or bring welfare measures, while the current government has taken steps for their welfare.

He then gave an example from his experience as an MLA in 2014, stating that members of the transgender community approached him and raised concerns about infiltration by people who were not genuinely part of the community. He said that children were allegedly being abducted, forcibly altered, and pushed into such roles, and that organized groups were operating across the country.

He used this to justify the amendment, saying that stricter provisions are necessary to protect genuine members of the community and prevent misuse.

He then explained that the bill clarifies the definition of transgender persons, including both biological conditions and recognized socio-cultural identities like kinnar, aravani, and jogta.

He said the amendment strengthens administrative systems, improves transparency in hospitals and authorities, and ensures better implementation of welfare. He then framed the bill as part of the government's welfare commitment under "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas," and said it aims to ensure dignity and protection for the community.

In conclusion, he said earlier no real steps were taken, but now the government is acting, and attempts to oppose or misrepresent the bill are not justified. He expressed his support for the bill.

Swati Maliwal, AAP (Delhi) — Opposed

She began by saying she was placing before the House “the weight of lives that cannot be ignored.” She then gave a specific example of a transgender teacher, Jane Kaushik, who secured jobs in two states but was forced to resign due to identity, not merit. She also referred to another case of a trans individual facing online hate, saying these are not isolated incidents but reflect ongoing discrimination.

She then presented the current situation, stating that transgender welfare boards are absent in 11 states and the National Council has limited reach. She said there are only 23 Garima Greh shelters across 17 states and questioned how many government hospitals actually provide gender-affirming surgeries despite provisions in law.

She then argued that while the law prohibits discrimination, it lacks penalties, stating that “a right without consequence is not a right, it is merely a suggestion.”

She then referred to the NALSA judgment, stating that gender identity is a fundamental right and does not require surgery, certification, or state approval. She said the 2019 Act recognized this, but the amendment narrows the definition, excludes identities based on self-perception, and mandates medical certification.

She then said the bill replaces “dignity with diagnosis, identity with inspection,” and argued that no other citizen is required to prove identity in this way.

She then brought in her experience from the Delhi Commission for Women, stating that certification processes often become humiliating. She said delays go beyond the mandated 30 days and cited examples where people were told “you don’t look like...” to question their identity.

She then raised an issue of unequal punishment, stating that sexual abuse of a transgender person carries a punishment of 6 months to 2 years, while for cisgender women it is at least 10 years. She questioned whether the dignity of a transgender woman is valued less.

She then addressed the provision criminalizing “alluring” someone to become transgender, saying it is vague and could target families, doctors, and support systems, creating fear instead of protection.

In conclusion, she said the House must stand with those who have been marginalized for centuries and demanded that the bill be sent to a select committee with wider consultation.

Amar Pal Maurya, BJP (Uttar Pradesh) — Supported

He began by stating that the issue of transgender rights is not only social but also connected to India's ancient culture and civilization. He said this community is not new and has always been part of Indian tradition.

He then framed the bill as part of governance that unites society, saying laws should connect humanity rather than divide it, and said the Modi government has demonstrated this approach.

He then moved into a political argument, criticizing the opposition for opposing every bill and questioning why earlier governments did not act on transgender welfare despite having the opportunity after independence. He said that for decades, including under Congress rule, no serious steps were taken.

He then brought in cultural and religious references, citing Ramcharitmanas and other traditions to say that transgender persons have been recognized historically and associated with divine and cultural significance. He referred to Ardhanarishvara and said this reflects their place in Indian belief systems.

He then added mythological examples from Mahabharata, mentioning figures like Shikhandi and roles played in warfare, to argue that the community has always had a place in society.

He then shifted to social reality, stating that despite this historical recognition, the community has been excluded from society, pushed out of homes, and denied access to food, education, and social participation. He said this exclusion continued even after independence.

He then criticized earlier governments again, stating that even after laws like removal from "criminal tribes" categories, proper rights were not given and issues were ignored.

He then highlighted the role of the Modi government, stating that after 2014, steps were taken to provide legal recognition, prevent discrimination, and ensure access to education, healthcare, and employment through the 2019 Act.

He then argued that the current amendment strengthens these efforts and ensures dignity and inclusion under the principle of "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas."

He also stated that terminology like kinnar, aravani, and jogta reflects cultural recognition and dignity.

He concluded by saying that transgender persons are equal citizens of the country and the bill ensures equality, respect, and inclusion, and reaffirmed his support for the amendment.

Mahua Maji, JMM (Jharkhand) — Opposed

She began by stating that the issue is not just about law but about **human dignity, constitutional rights, and social justice**. She said transgender persons have faced neglect, discrimination, and exclusion for centuries, and even though they are recognized as a “third gender,” equal rights are still not fully given.

She then described their lived reality, stating that they face discrimination within families, among relatives, neighbors, friends, and society at large.

She then referred to the NALSA judgment, stating that it recognized the right to self-identification as a fundamental right under Articles 14, 19, and 21. She contrasted this with the current bill, saying it links identity to district-level certification, which restricts that right.

She then gave an international example, citing Argentina’s 2012 gender identity law, which recognizes self-identification without medical barriers and has improved social acceptance. She said instead of learning from such examples, the bill limits rights.

She then gave examples of transgender persons’ achievements, mentioning Lakshmi Narayan Tripathi representing India internationally, Gauri Sawant, and Joyita Mondal becoming a transgender judge, to show that the community can succeed if given opportunities.

She then brought in the Jharkhand state example, stating that under the Hemant Soren government, transgender persons have been included in the OBC category, given reservation, and provided a monthly pension. She said this ensures both dignity and opportunity.

She then contrasted this with the central bill, saying that instead of empowering, it forces transgender persons to stand in line for identity verification.

She then raised the question that if states can provide rights and recognition, why the central government cannot do the same.

She also mentioned state-level initiatives like creating separate facilities in hospitals and sensitization measures to reduce discrimination.

She concluded by emphasizing that the aim should be to provide social security, dignity, and respect, and indicated her opposition to the bill’s approach.

Dr. Virendra Kumar, Minister of Social Justice & Empowerment — Supported

He began by saying that many members had participated in the discussion and raised important points, including technical details. He named several members from across parties and thanked them, saying that a common concern came through in the debate, that everyone was speaking in some form about the welfare and protection of the transgender community.

He then said the bill represents the nation's commitment to ensuring that every citizen lives with equal rights, dignity, and respect. He framed it under the government's larger approach of "**Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas**" and said the NDA government under Prime Minister Narendra Modi has worked continuously in this direction.

He said the purpose of the law is to protect those who face serious social exclusion because of their biological condition, something that is not their fault, because no child knows at birth in what form they will be born. He said that over time, practical difficulties and implementation issues emerged in the 2019 Act, and the amendment has been brought to address those.

He then said the effort of the government has always been to provide legal recognition to transgender persons and to ensure that their rights and dignity remain protected. He said the amendment is intended only for those who genuinely need such protection and that the definition now being proposed is in their interest.

He then defended the need for a clearer definition, saying that after the experience of implementing the 2019 Act, it became necessary to have a more precise and workable definition for administrative and legal purposes. He said self-identification creates practical difficulties when civil and criminal provisions and welfare benefits have to be implemented.

He then said that the Constitution is not only a legal document but the living expression of the nation's collective values, and that the Supreme Court had already made clear that denying gender identity violates Articles 14 and 21. He said the present law does not take away recognition but ensures that legal recognition continues in a more structured way.

He then referred to social exclusion and said that such exclusion takes away confidence, opportunity, and rightful place in society. He contrasted this with inclusion, saying that when transgender persons are welcomed in schools, workplaces, and public life, they gain not only rights but also the opportunity to contribute to national progress.

He then gave examples of inclusion efforts. He referred to **26 January 2026**, when around 60 transgender persons from 15 states were invited with honor to the Republic Day programme by the Prime Minister. He said that when they came to his residence before going to the event, many had tears in their eyes and said that for the first time after independence, a Prime Minister had invited them with such respect.

He then mentioned institutional examples. He said that at the Dr. B. R. Ambedkar International Centre and at the Ministry's building in Dwarka, transgender persons are running facilities such as souvenir shops and a canteen. He invited members to visit and see this directly, saying they would see how well these are being run and how much regular interaction the ministry has with the community.

He then said empowerment is not charity but justice, and that social inclusion is not optional but necessary. He said bringing marginalized communities into the mainstream is difficult and requires sustained effort, and that the government has been doing this over the last eleven years through education, health, housing, and social justice initiatives.

He then turned to the penal provisions. He said that under the 2019 Act, punishments were limited and general in nature, with a maximum of two years. He said the present amendment strengthens these provisions. He specifically emphasized the parts dealing with children, saying that if a child is abducted, forced, used for begging, bonded labour, or made to assume such an identity through force, deception, or undue influence, it is now made a serious punishable offence with penalties ranging from **10 to 14 years**, and in some cases **up to life imprisonment**, along with fines up to **₹5 lakh**.

He then said the government has already taken institutional steps. He stated that the **National Council for Transgender Persons** has held five meetings. He said transgender protection cells have been created in many states and union territories, though some states and UTs still have not established them. He similarly said that transgender welfare boards have been created in more than 30 states, though some still remain pending. On **Garima Greh**, he said 23 such shelters have been set up, and in some states expansion has been delayed because verification from the states is still pending.

He then responded briefly to some members' objections. On Renuka Chowdhury's concerns, he said the previous governments never seriously addressed the issue, whereas the Modi government brought the 2019 law and now this amendment. On Saket Gokhale, he said Parliament is acting with sensitivity, and that the training and awareness work done through national institutions shows this. He listed training, awareness, and skill programmes conducted across the country, including **67 training programmes with 61,934 participants, 32 skill development programmes with 800 participants**, national helpline support with over **6,000 calls**, employment fairs, museum and outreach efforts, and continued NGO-based work.

He then referred to other members such as Golla Baburao, Subhashish Khuntia, Ravi Chandra Vaddiraju, Dr. John Brittas, Dr. Sandeep Pathak, Sulata Deo, Dr. Fauzia Khan, Dr. Parmar Jashvantsinh, Subhash Barala, and Priyanka Chaturvedi, and said the concerns they raised are addressed by this bill. He said in particular that the role of the district magistrate already existed and that the medical board is being added only to assist with identification.

He concluded by assuring the House that under Prime Minister Modi's leadership the government stands sensitively with the transgender community. He said this amendment will

bring **administrative clarity**, **legal recognition**, and **protection of rights**, and urged members to support and pass the bill.

Speaker Harivansh — Procedural record

He first put to vote Dr. John Brittas's amendment seeking to refer the *Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Amendment Bill, 2026*, as passed by the Lok Sabha, to a Select Committee of the Rajya Sabha. He read out the proposed members of that committee and the reporting timeline. He then called for votes. Voices said "aye" and "no," and he declared that **the noes had it** and that **the amendment was negatived**.

He then put to vote Tiruchi Siva's amendment seeking to refer the bill to another Select Committee of the Rajya Sabha. He again read out the proposed members and reporting timeline, called for votes, and then declared that **the noes had it** and that **the amendment was negatived**.

After that, he put the motion that the *Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Amendment Bill, 2026*, as passed by the Lok Sabha, **be taken into consideration**. He called for votes and then declared that **the ayes had it** and that **the motion was adopted**.

He then moved to **clause-by-clause consideration** of the bill.

For **Clause 2**, he noted that there were multiple amendments by Tiruchi Siva, Dr. V. Sivadasan, and Dr. John Brittas, but recorded them as **not present / not moved**. He then put Clause 2 to vote and declared that **the ayes had it** and **Clause 2 was adopted**.

For **Clause 3**, he noted one amendment by Tiruchi Siva, asked whether it was being moved, and recorded it as **not present**. He then put Clause 3 to vote and declared that **the ayes had it** and **Clause 3 was adopted**.

For **Clause 4**, he noted amendments by Tiruchi Siva and Dr. John Brittas, but recorded them as **not present / not moved**. He then put Clause 4 to vote and declared that **the ayes had it** and **Clause 4 was adopted**.

For **Clause 5**, he noted amendments by Dr. V. Sivadasan and Dr. John Brittas, but recorded them as **not present**. He then put Clause 5 to vote and declared that **the ayes had it** and **Clause 5 was adopted**.

For **Clause 6**, he put the clause directly to vote and declared that **the ayes had it** and **Clause 6 was adopted**.

For **Clause 7**, he noted two amendments by Dr. John Brittas, asked if they were being moved, and then proceeded to vote. He declared that **the ayes had it** and **Clause 7 was adopted**.

For **Clause 8**, he noted one amendment by Dr. John Brittas, recorded it as **not present / not moved**, put the clause to vote, and declared that **the ayes had it** and **Clause 8 was adopted**.

He then put **Clause 1, the enacting formula, and the title** to vote and declared that **the ayes had it** and that **Clause 1, the enacting formula, and the title were adopted**.

After clause-by-clause consideration, he called on **Dr. Virendra Kumar** to move that the bill be passed. The minister moved the motion.

Speaker Harivansh then put the final question, **that the bill be passed**, called for votes, and declared that **the ayes had it** and **the bill was passed**.