



## **PRIDE AROOSTOOK**

% Aroostook County Action Program

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*From the back roads to the back porches **Pride Aroostook** is a welcoming and inclusive community affirming the experiences of rural, small town, and country LGBTQIA2S+ folks. We aim to support County residents as they provide spaces to thrive as their whole & authentic selves with support from our allies.*

**23 April 2023**

Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and Members of the Judiciary Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to give testimony today.

We are Pride Aroostook, an all-volunteer committee made up of Aroostook County residents, both LGBTQ+ and our allies, who stand together to support our community. We come from Fort Kent to Houlton and Limestone to Wade. We are truly County people and are proud to be so.

**We support LD1412, “RESOLUTION, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine Establishing That All Maine Residents Have Equal Rights Under the Law” and are asking you to do the same.**

This bill will align Maine’s Constitution with the Maine Human Rights Act, and protect people based on actual or perceived race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, physical or mental disability, ancestry or national origin of an individual.

Our committee has a wide range of volunteers who have a range of professional and personal experiences. We are Law Enforcement Officers and we work to serve our unhoused neighbors. We are Prevention Educators and professional Photographers. We work in Healthcare serving transgender folks in Aroostook and we are University Professors. And all of us are LGBTQ+ or Allies.

We know what it is like to live in rural Maine and be afraid to share that we got married, because our partner is the same gender as us. We know what it’s like to walk into a restaurant and not be certain if we’ll get served because we know what the owners post on



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facebook. We know what it's like to be students at County high schools and not be sure if we are safe in the hallways. And we don't want anyone else to know what that's like. We want all our residents, from the high schoolers to the Boston Cane recipients, to be safe in our gorgeous state. And we want our Aroostook County representatives and senators to stand with and protect their neighbors.

We hope that you will take into consideration the will of your constituents and vote to pass LD 1412 "RESOLUTION, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine Establishing That All Maine Residents Have Equal Rights Under the Law." By doing so you show that you care about ALL of Aroostook County's residents and we are deeply grateful to you for that.