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To whom it may concern,

I would like to express my SERIOUS concern over the proposed bill to "safeguard gender-affirming health care" for children in Maine. This is an incredibly irresponsible and dangerous proposal for Maine and for the children of our country. With the long-term effects of gender-affirming surgery in children essentially unknown at this time, and the obvious speed at which children are going from office visit to operating room, we need to take a step back and consider what this means for our children. (With an over 4,000% increase in children being referred for gender surgery the UK in the last few years, we should be raising our eyebrows!)

There is a dangerous precedent being set in our children's care that is seeing the mental health and factors of trauma in their lives be minimized in an effort to fast track them to the medical assembly line. We can do better than that. Once they get on, they'll never get off. We are dooming them to a lifetime of medical intervention.

I concerns me a great deal that we are putting the decisions about significant surgeries, most of which bear serious health risk, into the hands of children who are still going through enormous physical and mental shifts and changes. How many of you still feel as strongly now about what you did in 6th grade? And yet we are saying that at this age, and younger, a child is ready to make a decision that will permanently damage their body, their organs. We will piece their body apart, bit by bit, through surgery with little regard to their long-term mental and physical health, because we want to be "relevant" to the changing culture around us.

We have lost our common sense in this issue. We have lost our heart. It's not even remotely logical to section out a child's body for a whim that may be here today and gone tomorrow. As adults, most people are capable to making rational well-thought out decisions. This is America. People have freedom to do as they please. But children are not adults. They may feel very strongly about something that they could not possibly understand the nuanced (and inherit) dangers of.

The list of vocal detransitioners is growing... fast They are being silenced at every turn, but I urge you to hear their concern. They have lived it. They have felt what it was to feel abandoned by their medical providers, their parents, the justice system. Some have been given tools to begin the transitioning process in as little as ONE office visit! They have had massive mental and emotional needs swept under the rug for a "quick fix" that has left them broken forever. Transitioning does not "solve the problem." A Reddit group for destransitioners grew from 3,000 to over 16,000 members in a matter of a few months!

This bill is far to radical for Maine. I opposed it with all my being. We have no business overriding what other states have voted for. Let their government run their government. They actually have states that care about the well-being of the children, rather than the politicization of "care" and "well-being." To see how those words have been twisted and abused is sickening.

You have a chance to speak up. To say, "Slow down!" To guard the most vulnerable among us. Won't you please do the right thing?