

Dear Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and honorable members of the Judiciary Committee. I submit this testimony in support of LD 1735 - An Act to Safeguard Gender-Affirming Health Care.

Maine has the opportunity to become a safe haven for citizens that have had their existence threatened under penalty of law in other states to get healthcare that is recommended and approved by their provider. We can continue to establish Maine as a welcoming state to marginalized people and value their safety and value their lives. A person in Maine - any person - should be able to receive healthcare here without worrying about consequences to them or their family in their home state if they are students here, vacationing, or traveling.

Maine is ranked one of the safest states in the country and we should continue this tradition and extend it to every person that resides, schools, vacations, or visits our state. We must not let a small, unwelcoming fragment of our population whip up phantasms of fear or be heralds of hate.

I want the legislature to perpetuate Maine's reputation as a leader, as tolerant, as inclusive, and welcome and attract those who may face the oppressive hand of bad actors utilizing a wave of exclusion to secure and wield further power.

Howard Zinn said you can't stay neutral on a moving train. Some states are loudly proclaiming their exclusion, their threats to safety, and their hardness in their hearts. Maine will either make their own statement of welcoming, safety, leadership, and inclusion - or - it's silence may be deafening to many Mainers.

Thank you,
James Bailey