

# Maine Atheist Freethinker and Humanist Association

Maine Chapter - Freedom from Religion Foundation

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May 11, 2023

Members of the Judiciary Committee,

This is testimony IN FAVOR OF LD 1735.

Gender-affirming health care has been demonized by opponents, and this has poisoned the discourse. This healthcare includes a wide range of medical procedures and treatments that bring a patient into alignment with their gender identity and supports their emotional, mental, and physical well-being. It is not a treatment that is taken lightly. It is a detailed plan put together by healthcare experts and their patients and/or guardians and takes into account each individual's needs and circumstances. Early intervention is critical to ensure the good health of the patient, and such intervention for young people has been endorsed by many professional organizations, including the American Medical Association, the National Association of Social Workers, and the American Psychological Association.

But there are barriers, sometimes from insurers, sometimes even from healthcare providers and, most recently, from legislative efforts in other states to restrict access to these treatments. Most outrageously, many of these legislative efforts include reaching into other states to prosecute the violation of their laws.

Please support our state's transgender youth and assure them that they have a home here in Maine. Your vote to pass this legislation would enhance their ability to lead full and healthy lives. Please vote to pass LD 1735.