

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO

L.D. 930

AN ACT TO ALLOW ONLY STUDENTS OF FEMALE GENDER TO PARTICIPATE IN WOMEN'S AND GIRLS' SCHOLASTIC SPORTS

Senator Carney, Representative Moonen and members of the Judiciary Committee. I am Victoria Wallack, director of communications and government relations for Maine School Management Association, testifying on behalf of the legislative committees of the Maine School Boards Association and Maine School Superintendents Association, in opposition to L.D. 930.

Our associations oppose both bills because they discriminate against our students who identify as a different gender than what they were at birth. Public schools are obligated to make all students feel safe and welcome when they are in our care, and we believe that extends to allowing those that identify as a different sex be allowed to participate in school athletics based on that identity.

That decision would be made based on practice adopted by the Maine Principals' Association to advise schools to follow Chapter 337, SubChapter 5-B of the Maine Human Rights Act in allowing transgender participation in high school athletics consistent with their gender identity.

Our colleagues from MPA can better answer questions around this practice. They have been involved in this work with school and student athletes since 2013 and have tracked the requests by transgender students via their earlier Gender Equity and Inclusion policy. From our vantage point, we can say that it had been respectful and it worked. Now, their movement to advise schools to follow the Maine Human Rights Act provisions is yet another forward step to support all students respectfully in their wishes to play interscholastic athletics.

Both the MSBA and MSSA have adopted resolutions regarding equity in education that say all students, regardless of their race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, ancestry, national origin or disabilities deserve equitable opportunities in Maine schools.

We believe that equity includes participation in school athletics and compels us to oppose L.D. 930. We ask you to do the same.