



Testimony of GLBTQ Legal Advocates & Defenders, Equality Maine, MaineTrans.Net, OUT Maine, Maine Women’s Lobby, ACLU of Maine, Portland Outright, Maine AAP

Testimony in Support of LD 2142, “An Act to Correct Outdated References in the Maine Human Rights Act” - OTP

Joint Standing Committee on the Judiciary

January 23, 2024

Good day Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and Honorable Members of the Joint Committee on the Judiciary. My name is Mary Bonauto and I am a Maine-based attorney who works for GLBTQ Legal Advocates & Defenders. GLAD works in New England and nationally to protect our cherished fundamental freedoms and equality under the law. GLAD, together with ACLU of Maine, Equality Maine, MaineTrans.Net, OUT Maine, Maine Women’s Lobby, Portland Outright, and Maine AAP, supports **LD 2142, “An Act to Correct Outdated References in the Maine Human Rights Act.”**

We all appreciate Rep. Moonen’s bringing forth this bill. When Maine passed the Human Rights Act in 1971, it was clear then that it would need to be “continually” reviewed as to “practices infringing on the basic human right to a life with dignity” with “corrective measures” are “promptly recommended and implemented” and to prevent discrimination. Tit. 5 Me. Rev. Stat. sec. 4552.

This bill helps keep the Maine Human Rights Act robust by striking and replacing particular language about who is protected and on what bases different entities are prohibited from discrimination in employment and housing. The first 5 sections of the bill remove outdated language referring to people who sought or obtained final protection orders. It does so by striking a statutory reference that is now repealed and adds an updated statutory reference and including as well similar orders from other states. Section 6 of the bill clarifies that it is not unlawful credit discrimination to require both “spouses” in a marriage to sign a note and mortgage rather than exclusively “husband and wife.”

Thank you for your consideration of this bill and we urge this Committee to vote ought to pass.

Mary L. Bonauto
GLBTQ Legal Advocates & Defenders
257 Deering Ave.
Portland, ME 04103

On behalf of ACLU of Maine, Equality Maine, MaineTrans.Net, OUT Maine, Maine Women's Lobby, Portland Outright, and Maine AAP