

March 4, 2024

Senator Bailey, Representative Perry, and members of the Legislative Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services Committee, I am Katrin Teel of Glenburn, Maine. I am testifying in strong opposition to L.D. 227, An Act Regarding Health Care in the State.

As you know, if passed, L.D. 227 would make both “gender-affirming health care services” and “reproductive health care services” a “legal” right. However, both gender-affirming health care services and reproductive health care services are very broadly defined. Under this definition, medical necessity need not be proven. So, that begs the question, who is determining what “services” are included? And remember, once this is a “legal right”, no one, including private citizens can interfere with this right.

Also, L.D. 227 would allow lawsuits in Maine courts against a person who files “hostile litigation”. So, if parents in another state filed a lawsuit to stop a friend or family member from transporting their child to Maine for gender identity/abortion services, L.D. 227 would allow that person to sue the parents and seek punitive damages against the parents. This is an unprecedented new cause of action.

Lastly, L.D. 227 would prohibit a Maine court from enforcing a judgment from another state related to gender identity/abortion services. Hence, if another state issued a judgment against an individual for trafficking a child to Maine for said services, Maine courts would refuse to enforce that. Toward that end, I am stunned that Maine would have the audacity to consider usurping the authority and rights of parents/guardians of another state in our Union. The 14th Amendment states, in part, “No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges and immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of laws.” Of note, the U.S. Supreme Court cited this amendment in both *Pierce v. Society of Sisters* and in *Troxel v. Granville* in opinions that uphold parental rights.

It is important to recognize that U.S. Law affirms that parents are the child’s principal caregiver and have primary responsibility for their child. This bill demonstrates a willful ignorance of the law and is an embarrassment to the state of Maine.

Toward that end, I encourage you to vote no on L.D. 227. Thank you for allowing me to contribute my testimony.