

Sarah Patton
Freeport
LD 537

To the Maine Legislature:

Today I write in support of LD 537 "An Act to Prohibit the Doxing of a Minor and to Authorize a Related Civil Action". My name is Sarah Patton and I am a Freeport mother of two children and work as a medical provider in our community. Recently, I was appalled to see that a representative of the state of Maine revealed a child's identity online to further her political goals. I was surprised to learn that this was legal and that there were no repercussions for this representative. While it is extremely disappointing to see that a representative would do this and legislation should not be needed to enforce this issue, it seems this is where we find ourselves.

While there are some merits to social media, this younger generation has also felt the repercussions of the negative aspects which is why the previous surgeon general released a social media advisory in 2023. Additionally, according to the National Center for Transgender Equality's U.S. trans survey — the largest survey of transgender people to date, which was published in 2015 — 40% of trans youth reported attempting suicide in their lifetime. It is hard enough for trans youth and their families to successfully maneuver the current world we are living in—the last thing these children need is an elected official to spotlight their differences for the public. It is downright irresponsible and dangerous for these families. Further, it is reprehensible that an elected official would stoop to this level.

No one should use a child's identity, without the permission of their parents, to further a political agenda. If the intention of the members of the Maine legislature is to safeguard our children, this act should pass easily and I would encourage expeditiously.

Sincerely,
Sarah Patton